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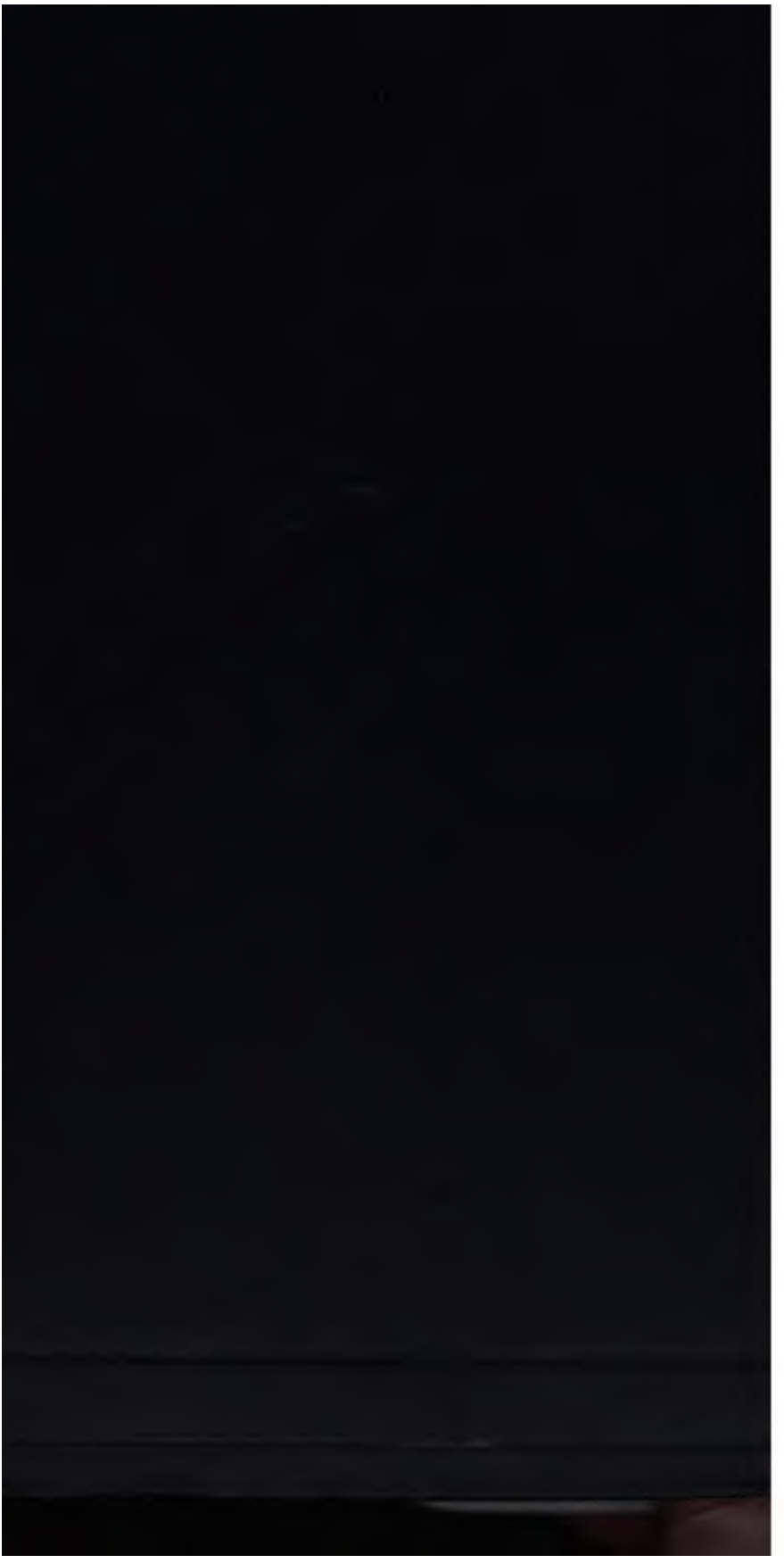

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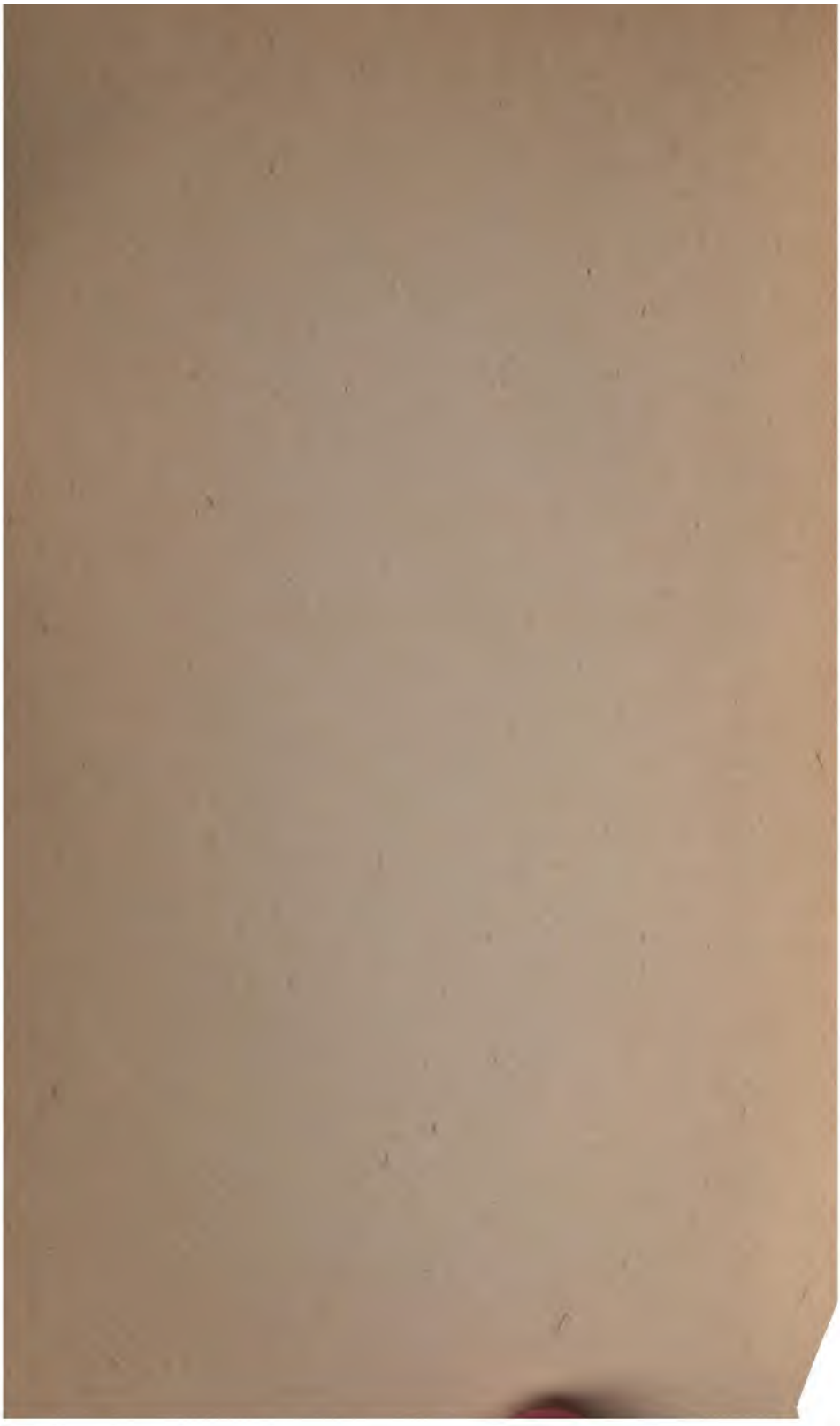

# WRITINGS

OF

# JOHN QUINCY ADAMS

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# WRITINGS

OF

# JOHN QUINCY ADAMS

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# WRITINGS

OF

# JOHN QUINCY ADAMS

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## TO THE SECRETARY OF STATE

No. 37. [ROBERT SMITH]

ST. PETERSBURG, 27 January, 1811.

SIR:

I have the honor to enclose herewith a translation of the official note which I have sent to the Chancellor, Count Romanzoff, after receiving your instructions contained in your favor of 2 September last, in relation to the complaint made in February last, by order of the Emperor against a certain Captain Arnold for a very outrageous act of defiance to the laws of this country, committed at Cronstadt.[1]

A few weeks before I had the honor of receiving your letter I had been informed that this Captain Arnold had sailed with his vessel, the *Carmelite*, from the United States during the existence of the embargo laws, and in violation of them. This circumstance was of itself sufficient to have mentioned as raising a probability that he would not place himself personally within reach of the judicial tribunals of the United States. But as your instructions appeared to consider it as an obligation of candor to allude to the defect of jurisdiction in the United States for the trial of the precise offence against which the Russian government had complained, I felt myself bound to do so in general terms. I have, indeed from the time when I received Count Romanzoff's note on this subject, very strongly regretted what I did

[1] Vol. III. 410.

then apprehend, that there was no jurisdiction in the United States competent to try the man for an act which every civilized human being must pronounce deserving of exemplary punishment. And I am not positively sure that the Emperor who could not forbear taking a strong interest in a transaction thus characterized and which took place almost before his eyes, will be altogether satisfied with the intimation that we have no authority that can take cognizance of the offence. I hope, however, that it will in no unfavorable manner affect his friendly sentiments towards the United States.

The papers of the American vessels which arrived at the out ports on the gulf of Finland, and on the Baltic after the closing of the navigation at Cronstadt, which by an express order of the Emperor were taken from the Commission of Neutral Navigation, and referred for a special examination to the Imperial Council, have not yet been returned, though in my letter of 27 December I informed you that Baron Campenhausen had assured me that the decision was in favor of their admission, and that I might write of the matter as entirely settled. *You will perceive, however, by reference to my letter of that date that I was aware of an obstacle which might still remain, as it actually did and still does.*

*At the time when the demands of France to this government were answered by denial I had every reason but one to expect that this denial would be supported by effectual and ultimate perseverance, and that one was that I saw the power of ultimate compliance was carefully retained. Since then the diplomatic communications between France and Russia have assumed a tone of mutual dissatisfaction, not to say of asperity. The annexation of the Hanseatic towns to the French empire has brought France into immediate contact with the Baltic Sea.*[1]

[1] The decree or project, without date, is in *Annual Register*, 1810, 505. The French flag was raised in the Hanse cities January 1, 1811.

*The frontier of Russia on the side of Poland has been strengthened by additional fortifications, and troops, and artillery; the levy of 90,000 to recruit the Russian armies has been followed by a conscription of 120,000 to reënforce those of France.*[1]

The new tariff of duties and prohibitions of importation has in the midst of this fermentation been issued here, and it is generally considered as specially pointed against the commerce with France.[2] This commerce which has of late been carried on almost entirely by land is extremely disadvantageous to Russia, inasmuch as it consists chiefly of importation in articles of the most expensive luxury which must be paid for in gold and silver. A committee of merchants was chosen from a general meeting of all the principal merchants of this city, to consider and represent the causes of the unfavorable state of the exchange; and in a memorial which was laid before the Imperial Council

[1] Cypher.

[2] The Emperor explained to Napoleon the necessity of the tariff: "Votre Majesté suppose que mon oukaze sur le tarif est dirigé contre la France. Je dois combattre cette opinion comme gratuite et peu juste. Ce tarif a été impérieusement commandé par la gêne extrême du commerce maritime, par l'importation énorme par terre de marchandises étrangères de prix, par les droits excessifs mis dans les états de votre Majesté sur des produits russes, et par la baisse effrayante de nôtre change. Il a deux buts en vue: le premier, c'est, en prohibant avec la plus grande sévérité le commerce anglais, d'accorder quelques facilités au commerce américain, comme le seul par mer dont la Russie puisse se servir pour exporter ses produits trop volumineux pour pouvoir l'être par terre; le second, de restreindre autant que faire se peut l'importation par terre comme la plus désavantageuse pour nôtre balance de commerce, introduisant une quantité d'objets de luxe très riches et pour lesquels nous déboursions nôtre numéraire, tandis que nôtre propre exportation se trouve si extrêmement gênée." *Alexander to Napoleon*, March 25, 1811. Tatistcheff, *Alexandre Ier et Napoléon*, 548.

By the treaty of Tilsit the commerce between France and Russia was placed upon the basis of the privileges and customs duties of the treaty of January 11, 1787, which were favorable to France.

while this subject was under deliberation, they represented the great importation from France of articles of luxury as one of the principal of those causes. They proposed, therefore, a general prohibition of importation of silks, velvets, laces, modes, costly wines, which contributed in their opinions so largely to drain this country of the precious metals, and consequently to aggravate the load of their depreciated paper.

The council adopted most of these opinions, and by their new tariffs, of which I shall send you a translation, all these articles are laid under a *tacit* prohibition; that is, they are not included in the list of articles the importation of which is permitted. The French dealers in this trade residing, or now transiently being at St. Petersburg, immediately took the alarm, and became so clamorous for the interposition of their Ambassador, that by his direction a meeting of all the French merchants was called at the house of the French consul, and a memorial of their grievances under the new tariff was drawn up, and has been forwarded by the Ambassador to Paris for the consideration of his government. It is generally supposed here that the French government will be much dissatisfied with these new regulations, though if power was accustomed to listen to reason, it must be obvious how ruinous to Russia a trade upon which she has to pay an enormous balance must be; *while in the most imperious tone she is required to sacrifice that portion of her commerce upon which the balance was always in her favor. The adoption of the new system was preceded by highly animated debates in the Imperial Council, at which the Emperor presided in person. It was opposed altogether by the Chancellor, Count Romanzoff, on the ground of its tendency to embroil the country with France, and when he found the opinion of the Council unanimous in opposition to this, he asked and obtained permission to enter*

*on the journals of the council his protest against the decision. At a subsequent meeting, however, when the Emperor expressed his determination conformably to the sentiments of the majority, the Count is said to have withdrawn his protest and declared his acquiescence in the resolution upon which the ukase was founded.*[1] *That it will give rise to discussions with France appears highly probable, and as an opinion of anticipation may be hazarded upon the foundation of inferences drawn from the state of affairs, the experience of late events, and the probable influence of French measures upon an irresolute government, I expect these discussions will lead to several modifications of the order itself.*[2]

The new tariff is generally considered by the merchants as remarkably favorable to the commerce of the Americans, and there is an article in it expressly providing in a very satisfactory manner for the care of these cargoes, the admission of which has been hitherto suspended, and which may eventually be admitted. Hitherto the delay has been a benefit to the owners rather than a disadvantage. The American vessels are only twenty-three or twenty-four out of more than eighty which arrived with them, and the papers of which were taken from the Commission for Neutral Navigation for the special examination of the Imperial Council. Of the whole number there are nineteen or twenty which have been found of suspicious character, and which have been ordered for trial, but among them I understand that none of the Americans are included.

None of the Americans, however, have yet been admitted to dispose of their cargoes. Most of their masters and supercargoes who are here, becoming uneasy under the delay,

[1] Navarro appears to have been the source of this information on the Imperial Council. See Adams, *Memoirs*, December 21, 1810.

[2] Cypher.

had a meeting last week, and addressed a memorial to me, requesting a further interposition on my part with this government in their behalf.[1] I had already since the commencement of the year had one conference with Count Romanzoff on the subject, and on the 23d instant I saw him again.[2] He said that the decision was at present before the Emperor himself, requiring only his signature, and was delayed only so far as proceeded from his personal good pleasure. He added that although it would not be so easy for him to urge his master, as he could his brother ministers, he would, however, do what he could to hasten the result. I am, etc.

## TO THE SECRETARY OF STATE

No. 38. [Robert Smith]

St. Petersburg, 5 February, 1811.

Sir:

The day but one after the date of my last letter, one of the merchants [3] to whom some of the vessels were consigned, the papers of which have now been nearly three months detained for examination, was informed by Baron Campenhausen, the Treasurer General of the Empire, that the decision was now complete for the admission of the list, including all the Americans excepting four; that the papers had been returned to him, and that he should transmit them the next day to the Commission for Neutral Navigation, with orders to proceed according to their first decision, which had been taken before the papers had been taken out of

[1] Printed in *Mass. Hist. Soc. Proceedings*, XLVIII.

[2] Adams, *Memoirs*, January 3, 23, 1811.

[3] Streglitz.

their hands by the Emperor's command, to be examined by a committee of the Imperial Council. The next day passed and the papers were not transmitted to the Commission. The day afterwards, being the thirty-first of January, I saw Baron Campenhausen myself, and asked of him the state of the business. He said it was entirely finished. I asked him whether his Majesty the Emperor had signed the report of the committee of the Council, which he had told me was the only thing that remained to be done. Without directly answering this question, he said that all the papers had been sent back to him together, and that he should *immediately* transmit them to the Commission for Neutral Navigation with orders to proceed and execute their first decision, which was (added the Baron) that the papers were found in regular order, so that this business was entirely finished. The first and second days of this month however passed away and none of the papers were to be obtained from the Commission of Neutral Navigation. If the cargoes should finally be admitted to be sold, the greatest part of them must be brought from Reval and Port Baltic by land to this city, a distance of 150 miles or more, for a market, and the return cargoes must in like manner be sent from this place by land. As the winter even in this climate, where it is all but immortal, is yet wasting away, and as these papers have now been detained nearly three months, the patience of the masters, supercargoes, and persons interested for the owners, is quite exhausted, and their hopes have been deferred until their hearts are sick. I received yesterday a letter from Mr. Meyer,[1] one of their principal consignees intreating me again to write to Baron Campenhausen in their behalf; which I accordingly did, and am now in expectation of his answer.

[1] J. C. Meyer, of the firm of Meyer and Brüxner, St. Petersburg.

From my former letters in relation to this affair, you will learn from what quarter all these difficulties have arisen. *I cannot state positively to you that a formal insinuation was made by France to this government that she expected none of the vessels belonging to the great convoy from Gothenburg would be admitted into the ports of Russia.*[1]

I send you an extract from the *Moniteur* to which I alluded in my letter of 5/17 December, and where you will find the question was already decided at Paris in November. I have another motive now for sending you the translation of this article at full length, which is, because Baron Campenhausen has repeatedly referred to it in our discussions concerning these vessels; and has intimated to me that he thought some notice of it should be taken by the American government. Some of the persons attached to the French embassy here have freely reported that these vessels were all English or sent here on English account, and the consul, as I am informed, has had as little hesitation as the *Moniteur* in announcing that they would not be admitted.

The Baron spoke to me of the article in the *Moniteur* (of 12th November) as of a letter from Elsineur. I told him that I presumed he was aware that this article, though bearing the date of Elsineur, was fabricated at Paris, for the purpose of being put into the *Moniteur*. There was internal evidence enough of that in the article itself, which he admitted. I then asked him whether he thought the pages of the *Moniteur*, or *of any other gazette* on the continent of Europe, would be as free for such an answer as that article deserved as they were for the article itself?

*I believe the Baron thought I was going to ask leave to publish an answer in the St. Petersburg gazette, for he immediately perceived that a proper notice of the article could not easily*

[1] Cypher.

*find access to the same vehicles.*[1] But what could be the motives of France for denouncing as false and forged *all the clearances and certificates* of the vessels at Gothenburg, purporting to be American? I told him that it was not for me to account for the motives of France. They were indeed obvious enough to my mind, and I believed would not easily escape the sagacity of his. France did not choose that any nation on the continent of Europe should enjoy the benefit of a commerce of which she was herself deprived. Where she could exercise authority, she did not trouble herself to assign reasons, and thus Denmark and Prussia had excluded American vessels from their ports, without pretence of a cause. But as this process would not answer for Russia, some charge against American vessels must be adduced to obtain their exclusion, and as there might have been some instances in which British vessels had been detected with forged papers in the guise of American documents, the shortest expedient was to declare the real American papers forgeries too. *As to scruples of veracity or of delicacy, how were they to be expected from a Government which had not hesitated to declare the acts of its own accredited agents forgeries.*[1] For I could assure him that there were many American vessels provided with genuine certificates of origin from the French consuls in America, long after the French government had declared all such papers to be forgeries. He said it was in fact very extraordinary; but that such a declaration had formally been made by the Duke de Cadore to this government. "That every paper produced as a certificate of origin, from a French consul in America, was a forgery, the French consuls giving no such papers." I told him it was only an error of chronology. The Duke no doubt had issued orders to the French consuls to give no

[1] Cypher.

more certificates, and had concluded those orders were obeyed before they were received. *It was to be sure treating their own consuls with not much ceremony, for hereafter every man who should receive a document from them must be prepared to find it declared to be a forgery by their own government, if a purpose could be answered by it. But the natural effect must be to weaken the credit of all declarations from the government itself which could so lightly falsify the acts of its own officers.*

The day before yesterday the French Ambassador sent to enquire whether I should be at home in the morning and could see him. I informed him that I should be happy to receive him, and he accordingly called upon me. I found as I had expected that his object was to converse with me on the subject of these vessels and cargoes, which he appeared to consider as *sequestered.* He intimated an opinion that a great proportion of the commerce in American vessels arrived here was upon English account, upon which I endeavored as much as possible to undeceive him. He thought that such quantities of colonial articles, particularly of sugar, could not possibly come from any place not in possession of the British, and especially that they could not have originated in the United States. I told him that the West India Islands and many parts of South America were open to us, and were competent to supply far greater quantities of these articles than had been imported here, and that of such articles imported in American vessels, the general conclusion would be much more correct that they could not be, than that they must be the produce of British possessions. He asked me how it had happened then that those American vessels had met with such difficulties in obtaining admission? I told him that perhaps he could tell, as the credit of it was principally attributed to him. He smiled and said he supposed I meant the credit of having required a rigorous examination.

He expressed much concern at the distressed state of commerce generally; and a strong wish that England might finally come to some terms which would make its relief possible. He also appeared anxious to know what the state of our affairs with England would be in case the Orders in Council should not have been revoked on the second of this month.[1]

I enclose herewith two translations of the new ordinance concerning the Russian commerce for the present year. One of which, in manuscript, I had made by the gentleman in my family, before the printed one, made by the merchants for their correspondents, was finished. The extract specifies some of the articles which are prohibited in a mass. It is a subject of no small curiosity here, how the ordinance will be received at Paris. I am with the utmost respect, etc.

*Of this extract from the Moniteur of 20th November I have only one word more to say. If you have received my letter (No. 31) you may perhaps perceive the kernel of all this exaggeration in the article dated Elsineur. The want of a genuine American consul at Gothenburg may prove a heavy misfortune to our commerce. It is so ungracious a task to make reports about persons acting as public officers tending to show their unfitness for their places that nothing but a sense of duty to the public paramount to considerations of mere delicacy could have induced me to write that letter.*[2]

[1] This interview is more fully reported in Adams, *Memoirs*, February 3, 1811.

[2] Cypher.

## TO THE SECRETARY OF STATE

No. 39. [ROBERT SMITH]

ST. PETERSBURG, 12 February, 1811.

SIR:

Mr. Hazard,[1] a young American gentleman, left this city last week for Copenhagen. I entrusted to him two packets of dispatches for you, to be forwarded from that place or from Gothenburg by the earliest safe opportunities of conveyance that may occur. One of the packets enclosed two letters for Count Pahlen, which the Chancellor, Count Romanzoff, sent me with a request that I would transmit them.

I mentioned in my last letter that I had written a note to Baron Campenhausen, urging the restoration of the papers of the American vessels, which had been for three months in a state of suspense, and that I was in expectation of his answer. My note to him was written on the 4th instant, my letter to you on the 5th, and Mr. Hazard left this city the 6th. Before he went away I was informed that the Commission for Neutral Navigation had received the papers of some of the vessels, with the order for their admission; but every step in the transaction of this business had been attended with circumstances which left on my mind such uncertainty with regard to its final result, that I did not think it safe either to add this information in the dispatches which were already made up for Mr. Hazard, or to detain him any longer to receive the Baron's answer.

The papers of seventeen vessels were actually returned, with orders for the admission of the entire cargoes of nine

[1] Samuel Hazard.

of them, and the principal part of those of the other eight —that is, of all that were provided with the certificates of origin from the Russian consuls, required by the law of this country. But I did not receive Baron Campenhausen's answer to my note until the 9th.

There are still five vessels, whose cargoes have not yet been admitted, being in the same predicament with those parts of the eight which are partially admitted, that are yet in suspense—that is, they have no certificates from the Russian consuls. From what has repeatedly been said to me by Baron Campenhausen in our conversations respecting these vessels, and from a renewed assurance which I received from him yesterday, I should have reason to expect that these cases will be settled in a very few days, and as favorably as the rest; *but as I have reason to believe that the struggle of influence against their admission is not yet finally subdued I cannot yet in full security promise you that they will be admitted. The law of the country as you know is precise, that goods coming from ports where there are Russian consuls must be furnished with their certificates or be excluded the Russian ports. They can therefore be admitted only by special favor, and although at my solicitation that favor had before the arrival of these vessels been granted in several instances, as Baron Campenhausen informed me, by the express command of the Emperor, it was not considered as establishing a general precedent, which might be appealed to in similar and subsequent cases.*

*The coolness or misunderstanding between the cabinets of St. Petersburg and of Paris which has been mentioned in several of my letters has become a subject of very general notoriety. In the accounts which go from this country to England, and which there find their way into the English newspapers, it is always much exaggerated; while in the French gazettes, it is, with*

*as little knowledge of the facts or as little regard to the truth, utterly denied.*[1] In the *Journal de l'Empire* of 19 January, there is a note copied from the *Moniteur* of the preceding day, upon an article in the *Morning Chronicle;* which note declares that the relations between France and the continental Powers were never more intimate than at present. It does not however precisely say that the harmony between France and Russia is as great as it has been heretofore. In truth the military movements and organization in the Duchy of Warsaw on one part, and the reënforcements of all kinds which are constantly sending from this city to that frontier on the other, have excited so much of the public attention here that the rumor of war with France as on the point of breaking out has become universal. *About two months since a General Hitroff,*[2] *an aid de camp of the Emperor Alexander, was taken by an order from the Minister of Police at the moment when he was going to a ball at the French Ambassador's, with whom he and his family were particularly intimate, and was transported either to Siberia or to some other place of banishment or of imprisonment; a circumstance, which in the unexampled mildness of the present reign could not fail to excite an extraordinary degree of attention. Of the offense which produced an act of such unusual rigor no other public notice has been taken, but the report which has been circulated in connection is, that the General had furnished to the Ambassador himself statements of the military forces of the Empire, too detailed and too confidential to be consistent with his duty. Various other occurrences of minor importance have indicated symptoms of political alienation between the French and Russian governments. Similar apprehensions have certainly existed at Paris, and have manifested themselves in the commercial relations of individuals. The bankers of Paris for some months*

[1] Cypher.

[2] Adams, *Memoirs*, February 3, 8, 1811.

*have refused to accept bills from St. Petersburg, drawn upon open credits, and the Russian Ambassador there, Prince Kurakin himself, has been obliged to request that remittances may be made to him in specie. I have indicated in my former letters the causes of these menacing appearances, which have consisted of a continual series of encroachments on the part of France, which Russia has overlooked as long as was possible, and on the part of Russia hitherto of nothing but the refusal to adopt the tariff and incendiary decrees of France, and the obstinate adherence to the fair and profitable relations of commerce with the United States.*[1] I do not add the late ordinance for regulating the Russian commerce during the present year, because it is not yet ascertained in what light that will be considered by the French government. But the annexation of the Hanseatic cities to the French Empire has been specified by a boundary line which besides cutting off a large portion of the kingdom of Westphalia, strips entirely of his dominions and of his possessions the Duke of Oldenburg,[2] father of the Prince who is married to the Emperor Alexander's sister, the Grand Duchess Catherine. As to the *integrity* of the kingdom of Westphalia, it is probably not an object of much concern to Russia, but the Duke of Oldenburg was in a manner under the special protection of the Emperor Alexander, and his spoliation has contributed to aggravate the discontent which this measure has occasioned here.

Notwithstanding all these appearances, so universal is the desire of all the Emperor Alexander's counsellors, and so sincere and anxious is his own wish to preserve peace with France, that unless it be the deliberate and irrevocable determination of France to come to a rupture with Russia the peace between them will yet be preserved. *I wish it may*

[1] Cypher.

[2] Peter Frederick, now bishop of Lübeck.

*be preserved without the ultimate compliance of Russia in those measures which have been required of her, to exclude the American commerce from her ports: but all the transactions respecting the Havana sugars, imported in American vessels last summer, at Archangel, and all those relating to these vessels from Gothenburg have shown, together with a strong and sincere desire on the part of Russia to support and encourage this trade, some hesitation and indecision in the will to maintain its own system of policy. The new ordinance respecting commerce itself has already to a certain extent complied with the demands of France, though in connection with that compliance it has combined regulations restrictive to the trade of France, and if England should persist in maintaining her orders of council, and France should renew with the emphasis which may be expected the demands which have hitherto been so far withstood, our commerce with this country will be suspended.*

*If on the other hand, according to the expectation now generally entertained here and prevailing throughout Germany, a war between France and Russia should very speedily ensue, it may be of some importance to consider what its effects upon our commercial relations may probably be.*[1] But I do not consider this event either as so near or so probable as to require for the present the remarks which, if the occasion should offer, I may submit to you on the subject hereafter. I am very respectfully, etc.

[1] Cypher.

## TO THE SECRETARY OF STATE

No. 40. [ROBERT SMITH]

ST. PETERSBURG, 19 February, 1811.

SIR:

. . . . . .

I need not trouble you with many comments upon this conversation,[1] which I have detailed as accurately as my recollection would permit, as it passed. I shall only remark that the Ambassador had the appearance of a full personal conviction that the certificates which he had been ordered to declare forgeries were really genuine; but that he seemed to think, what however he did not maintain, that his government considered it a fair expedient for the purpose of obtaining the confiscation of American vessels and cargoes, to brand with the mark of forgery, documents really furnished by the consuls of France in the United States; that by receiving without any denial the intimation that all the impediments, which our commerce here encounters, are ascribable solely to the interference of the French government, and its influence operating against us, he tacitly admitted what, if the fact had been otherwise, he would certainly most strenuously have denied; that by the expression that our commerce had found *powerful protection*, he still more clearly disclosed the weight of opposition against which protection was necessary; and that by the reply which he made to my observation, that I considered the encouragement of the American commerce in Russia as perfectly reconcilable with the alliance between Russia and France, he

[1] With the French Ambassador. It is given in the *Memoirs*, February 15, 1811, in much the same words as were used in this dispatch.

evidently indicated that he was instructed to represent them here as things not compatible with each other.

*It will be obvious to you that in contending for the authenticity of documents which have thus officially been declared false by the government itself whose agents issued them, I have been laboring under a disadvantage which it has been impossible altogether to overcome, the certificates themselves and my confidence in those who produced them being the only evidence and argument that I have to oppose to this formal and public declaration. The opinion expressed by Campenhausen, that some public notice should be taken by the government of the United States of these French official calumnies will doubtless be duly weighed by the President. At least it may be important for the protection both of the property and reputation of many of our citizens, to demonstrate that they are unjustly charged with having produced forged papers, purporting to be certificates of origin from French consuls, and that the papers which they have produced as such were genuine.*[1] I am very respectfully, etc.

## FROM THE SECRETARY OF STATE

[Robert Smith]

Department of State, February 26, 1811.

Sir:

On the 15th October last I had the honor of stating to you that it had been intimated to the President by a person particularly attentive to your interest,[2] that your return from the mission to St. Petersburg had become necessary to avoid the ruinous expenses to which it subjected you, and I was then directed to signify to you, that however acceptable your continuance there would be,

[1] Cypher.

[2] His mother, Abigail Adams.

the President could not, under such circumstances, refuse his acquiescence in your wish, nor would he allow your return to impair the sentiments which had led to your nomination.

I have now the satisfaction to inform you that the President has thought proper to avail the public of your services at home, and has accordingly appointed you by and with the advice and consent of the Senate to the seat on the bench of the Supreme Court of the United States vacated by the death of Judge Cushing.[1]

This appointment will make it proper that you should return to the United States, as soon as the public interest and your own convenience will permit. You are accordingly herewith furnished with a letter of leave, to the Emperor; and in presenting it you will be sensible of the propriety of giving not only such explanations and assurances as may be calculated to prevent the circumstance of your return from being misconstrued, but such as may be best suited to convince the Emperor of the continued friendship of the United States.

You will moreover assure the Russian government that no time will be unnecessarily lost in sending out your successor. . . . With great respect and consideration I have the honor to remain, etc.

R. SMITH.

[1] Justice Cushing died September 13, 1810. See *Mass. Hist. Soc. Proceedings*, XLIV. 527.

The appointment was first offered to Levi Lincoln, who declined it. The most active applicant was Gideon Granger. "Granger has stirred up recommendations throughout the eastern states. . . . The soundest republicans of New England are working hard against him, as infected with Yazooism and intrigue. They wish for J. Q. Adams, as honest, able, independent, and untainted with such objections." *Madison to Jefferson*, December 7, 1810. *Writings of Madison* (Hunt), VIII. 111*n*. Madison, in March, 1811, looked upon Adams' return with such confidence, that he proposed to appoint Robert Smith, then Secretary of State, to the "vacancy" at St. Petersburg. *Ib.*, 144.

## TO JOSEPH PITCAIRN

ST. PETERSBURG, 19 March, 1811.

DEAR SIR:

I have duly received your favors of 22 December and of 2nd of this month, and give you thanks for the trouble you have taken to make inquiries concerning the tobacco which had been shipped by Mr. Hellen, and for the information which you have obtained and communicated to me relating to them.

The object of the Russian manifest for regulating the commerce of the Empire was, as is naturally to be supposed, to promote the interests of the Empire itself. Its intention as I am assured was to favor neutral commerce, that is, under the circumstances of the present time, the commerce of the United States. Whether the modifications which you suggest or any others will be obtainable may depend upon circumstances. If the occasion should present itself, I shall avail myself of your hints and observations. I do not consider the commercial system of this country as yet irrevocably fixed, and it must always in some degree sympathize with the state of general politics.

Neither the merchants, nor any other persons of my acquaintance here, are at all convinced of the advantages to Russia of a water communication inland between Lübeck and Antwerp; but neither do I know that they deem it any great disadvantage. There was a time when European statesmen used to reason about a balance of power, somewhat as metaphysicians reason about free will and foreknowledge. There was a time, also, when in the principles of political architecture a tradesman's shop, or a peasant hut, could exist close by the side of a royal or an imperial

palace. But those times have changed. The cottage must be incorporated with the palace, and whether it is barely brought within the circuit of the walls of the other, or is made part of the *corps de logis* itself, is not very material, either to the comfort or safety of the neighboring palaces. The ministers of the late king of Holland might have known, without sending M. Labouchère[1] to London, that their political independence in that condition was not a weight to put in the scale against the British orders of council. The Hanseatic League was a remnant of feudality still more singular than Holland. With what longing and ardent eyes it had been viewed by Denmark and Prussia in the days of their vigor, I need not tell you. The name of independence applied to it for many years past was scarcely a serious term, and it may possibly be considered, that as members of the great family they will be treated with more tenderness themselves, and therefore be more safe and useful neighbors, than while in the solitude of a nominal independence they were destitute of a protector. The change of government in the Hanseatic cities has not, that I have heard, excited much displeasure here. Other causes may be operating of a more powerful nature, but as yet nothing of a decisive nature has occurred.

I would willingly hope that the mission to Copenhagen will be attended with favorable consequences. But I know not anything more is to be expected, than there would be, if a senatus consult had found Holstein and Helwick and Jutland, and even the Island of Zeeland, as convenient for internal navigation as Hamburg, Lübeck and Bremen.

There is no foundation whatever for the report that your friend[2] proposes a journey to Paris. There is not a city in

[1] Pierre-César Labouchère, a member of the banking house of Hope, at Amsterdam.

[2] Adams himself.

the world which he has less inclination or less prospect of visiting. He thinks in this respect as you do, and when he leaves the place of his present residence it will undoubtedly be to return home. It is possible that this may happen during the present year, though it may be postponed until the next. In the meantime he hopes to hear from you as heretofore, and when he goes will give you seasonable notice.

. . . . . .

## TO ABIGAIL ADAMS

ST. PETERSBURG, 19 March, 1811.

. . . . . .

Our society here, as you will naturally suppose, is principally composed of the Corps Diplomatique, which of all the movable sand banks in the world of mutability is perhaps the most given to change. When we arrived here in October, 1809, it consisted of a French ambassador, ministers of the second order from the kings of Denmark, Prussia, Sardinia, Saxony, Bavaria, Württemburg, Holland, Spain, Naples, and Westphalia. There were from Sweden the two negotiators who had just concluded the peace of Fredericshamn, one of whom had been for many years the Swedish ambassador at this Court, and then had, as he still has, the powers without the formal character of ambassador. There was also a chargé d'affaires from Portugal, or from the Prince Regent of Brazil, and an agent from the Hanseatic cities. Austria and England were not represented. Seven of these kings, besides the French Emperor, were themselves novelties, created since the commencement of the present century, and lineally descended from the revolution, which

was to found liberty, equality and fraternity, and to abolish monarchy on the face of the globe. Four of them, Holland, Spain, Naples and Westphalia, were of the *collateral* Bonaparte dynasty, which had been set up before he had undertaken to have children of his own to provide for.

We had been here about three months when the Duke de Mondragoné, the minister from the king of Naples, was recalled, and took leave. Observe that by the king of Naples I mean the person once named Joachim Murat, whose title to that throne sprouted from his marriage with a sister of the Emperor Napoleon. For there is yet here another Neapolitan nobleman, the Duke de Serra Capriola, an ex-ambassador of the ancient king of the two Sicilies, Ferdinand, but who is not recognized in that capacity now. The Duke de Mondragoné was the head of one of the proudest and most illustrious noble familes of the kingdom of the two Sicilies, and the envoy extraordinary and minister plenipotentiary of Joachim Murat.

About the same time Count Einsiedel, the minister from the king of Saxony, was recalled from the mission here, and sent in the same capacity to Paris. He was a man of infinite humor and pleasantry, but he protracted for five months at least our residence at a very uncomfortable public inn. He received his recall in December, and was to go in January. I engaged to take the house which he was to quit, which we accordingly now occupy. But from January to June he was always going the next week, and we were waiting at the inn.

The Bavarian minister, the Chevalier de Bray, a Frenchman by birth, was the only public minister who had his wife and family with him. They were very amiable, and paid us all possible attention. But after passing the last winter here, they went into the country. He obtained a leave of

absence to travel for one year, and they are now at Rome or Naples.

The Chevalier Six d'Oterbeck, the minister from the king of Holland, was an old acquaintance of mine. I had seen him in the year 1795, as the Citizen Six in the first year of the Batavian liberty, go to Paris from the Batavian republic to attempt a negotiation for peace with the Committee of Public Safety of the French republic, one and indivisible. He was now metamorphosed into the Chevalier Six d'Oterbeck, bedizened with the ribbons of three orders of knighthood, and envoy extraordinary and minister plenipotentiary from the king of Holland. The king of Holland was the person, who in the year 1801 had been introduced to me by General Beurnonville at Berlin, by the name and style of *le Colonel Bonaparte*. The king of Holland to me, who had received part of my education at Amsterdam and at Leyden, and who at a later period had myself been accredited to their High Mightinesses the States General of the United Netherlands, was as good a sound to the ears as the sight of Citizen Six, with his ribbons and his stars, was to the eye. But the king of Holland is no more. About the month of January, 1810, Monsieur de Champagny, otherwise the Duke de Cadore, the Emperor Napoleon's minister of Foreign Affairs, made the discovery that Holland was nothing but an alluvion of France, whereupon the king of Holland made a treaty with his august brother ceding about one-third of his kingdom to France. And as, notwithstanding this cession, the British ministers refused to repeal the orders of council, the king of Holland abdicated, his whole kingdom was incorporated with the French empire, and my friend the Chevalier Six d'Oterbeck found himself in the condition of Othello, his occupation was gone. So he had the honor of dining with the Emperor Alexander, which he could not

have had if he had been simply a minister recalled, went to Paris last August, was appointed Intendant of the Domains, and received the Emperor Napoleon's permission to wear the ribband of the Bavarian order of St. Hubert, a very large blue ribband. I call him my friend the Chevalier Six d'Oterbeck, because with all his metamorphoses and all his ribbands, he is a good hearted, friendly, as well as a sensible, and well informed man. While he remained here, I was upon a footing of great intimacy with him, and I met with a very serious loss in his departure. He had almost all the sound and useful qualities of the ancient Dutch character, and he had a very peculiar and sincere regard for our country, where he is the owner of considerable possessions.

One of the Swedish negotiators whom I mentioned was here only a few weeks, and returned to Sweden. Count Stedingk, the informal ambassador, was to have remained only until last June, and a frigate then actually came to take him home. But just at that time happened the sudden death of the late Crown Prince, and Count Stedingk was requested to stay here some time longer. He is yet here, and a most amiable and respectable man. He served with the French army in America during our war, and was wounded at the affair of Savannah.

About a month after us arrived here Count St. Julien, as an informal envoy from the Emperor of Austria. The Emperor of Austria in that character is as much of a novelty as all the rest. The reason for all these informal missions is to escape from questions of etiquette, and the necessity of disputing for precedence with the French ambassador, who would take and maintain it upon all occasions, before all other ambassadors. Before the dissolution of the German empire, French ambassadors yielded precedence to

those of the Emperor of Germany. Now they insist upon it themselves. To avoid unprofitable contest Austria sent Count St. Julien, first without diplomatic rank, and now with the character of envoy extraordinary, that he may without any evaporation of dignity walk after the French ambassador. But then he is treated as a sort of semi-ambassador, something more than a mere envoy, and has been all winter preparing to live in style.

The agent from the Hanseatic cities vanished from the diplomatic circle about two months ago, upon the incorporation of his sovereigns with the French empire. I have not seen him since. He was a very respectable man, and from his long residence in this country an agreeable acquaintance. His name is Wiggers.

The chargé d'affaires from Portugal, the Chevalier Navarro d'Andrade, I had known as the Secretary of the Portugal legation at Berlin. He is also my very worthy and valuable friend, but he is recalled. A minister is appointed to come in his stead, and he expects to depart in May or June.

Lastly the French ambassador, Coulaincourt, Duke de Vicenza, Grand Ecuyer of France, one of the most accomplished as well as one of the greatest noblemen of the Napoleon creation, has received his recall, and only waits for the arrival of his successor, a Count and General Lauriston.[1] We shall regret the ambassador, whose civilities to us have been frequent and uninterrupted, and but for a reserve which we have thought necessary in accepting them, would have been much more frequent still. He lives in a style of magnificence scarcely surpassed by the Emperor himself, and has an easy unassuming simplicity of manners, which is not very common among the modern grandees, and which does not always distinguish even the antediluvian great.

[1] Jacques-Alexandre-Bernard Law, Marquis de Lauriston (1768–1828).

And here ends my first canto of mutability. I will make you acquainted with many of the persons whom we have most frequently associated with here, and show you how they pass like Chinese shadows before us. But whatever changes I may witness or experience, be assured that my duty and affection to you will remain immutable. All well.

## TO ABIGAIL ADAMS

St. Petersburg, 10/22 March, 1811.

I dined yesterday at the French ambassador's, at a diplomatic dinner of about sixty persons, in the highest and most formal style. I give you a description of this entertainment, which may amuse you as a specimen of the usages at the time and place, and give you an idea of what is understood to be the suitable style of an ambassador. The invitation was by printed card, sent five or six days before the dinner, which by the custom is the signal of a *formal* entertainment. All invitations to dinner *without ceremony* are sent by verbal message, or given personally. The printed cards, although on the face of them they ask for an answer, never are answered, unless to decline the invitation. The only answer expected is personal attendance. When the invitation is *without ceremony*, the guests are expected to go not in full dress, but in frock coats, and if you choose in boots and with a round hat. But when the invitation is *by card*, they must go in full court dress, that is to say in uniform, for there is no court dress here but an uniform. In the summer season, however, the Chancellor of the Empire, Count Romanzoff, sometimes invites by cards, specifying that the company are to come in frock coats.

The hour of dining varies at different houses from four to five o'clock. The Chancellor's cards are always for four o'clock, the ambassador's for half-past four. These are the only two houses where entertainments of this kind are given, or at least where I have witnessed them.

At half-past four therefore I went to the ambassador's hotel, at the outer door of which stood the porter, or *Swiss*, in full dressed livery, deeply bordered with gold lace, a three-cornered hat, also gold laced, a broad girdle of cloth passing over from the right shoulder to the left side, bordered with gold lace and worked with gold embroidery, and a large thick staff about five feet long, and headed with silver. He opened the folding doors and I stepped from the carriage into the house. As my style here is altogether republican, I went only in a chariot and four, attended by two footmen in livery, and driven by a coachman on the carriage box, and a postillion, between boy and man, on the right side horse of the leading pair. My own footmen followed me about half the way up the stairs, when I threw off and gave them my *shoop*, a large outside fur garment, fit only for wearing in a carriage. The weather not being cold I had not taken with me the loose boots lined with fur or flannel, which are also worn in winter when riding in carriages, and are thrown off on entering the house. These are indispensable in the severity of the season, and are slipped on and off over shoes and silk stockings with as much ease as the shoop is from the shoulders.

On the steps of the staircase at the Ambassador's hotel stood a line of twenty footmen, reaching from the bottom to the top of the stairs, all in the same livery as the Swiss, excepting the girdle, staff and hat, and in silk stockings instead of boots. They stand there from the time when the company begins to come, until all the guests are arrived.

They stand like so many statues, and are there merely for the magnificence of the show. At the top of the staircase, at the folding doors of the first antichamber, stood two *chasseurs* with pea green liveries, as deeply laced with silver as those of the footmen with gold, and with each a hanger suspended at the thigh by a leathern baldric passing over the shoulder. These like the Swiss were in boots. In the second antichamber was a line of eight upper servants, above the rank of footmen and chasseurs, in uniform dresses embroidered in gold, but of the same colors with the liveries. They were all in silk stockings, and stood like the footmen, merely to be seen by the company. In the third antichamber the guests were received and greeted by the Ambassador's secretaries and by the French consul. The Ambassador himself stood in the saloon, near the door of entrance, both folds of which were wide open, and there received and returned the salutations of each guest as he arrived, after which the guest passed on into the circle standing without any regular order about the hall. In the course of half an hour the whole company was assembled, and all continued standing until the Ambassador's steward in a full dress, not of livery, but of cloths richly embroidered in the ancient style of court dresses, came and announced to him that the *shaal* was ready. The *shaal* is a dram of cordials served with a relish of cold tongue, or ham, caviar, cheese, anchovies and other stimulants to appetite, which it is customary to take immediately before sitting down to dinner. It was served on a small table in the second antichamber, and each guest who chose to take it helped himself at the table, without sitting down. This ceremony being performed, which did not occupy more than five minutes of time, the Ambassador bowing round to the company invited the Chancellor to pass into the dining hall, and accompanied him to his place at his

own right hand at the middle of the table. The remainder of the company followed without any particular order of precedence, each person taking his place according to his own idea of propriety, or to the courtesy of others. All the ministers and general officers, however, national and foreign, waited yesterday, and gave the *step* of precedence, immediately after the Chancellor and the Ambassador, to the Austrian envoy extraordinary and minister plenipotentiary, Count St. Julien, who for certain reasons is treated with very peculiar distinction at this time. The rest of the company took their places as I have mentioned at *discretion.*

The dinner was over in about an hour, and seldom lasts longer on these occasions of parade. There is no distinction of different services, and no time lost in getting on and removing dishes, or in carving. The table is elegantly decorated with a plateau, and a variety of images in porcelain and ornamented plates filled with confectionery and fruits, which form part of the dessert, but no dish is ever set upon the table. Those that require carving are all carved by the principal servants in attendance. The dinner begins with soup, a plate of which is carried by the footman and offered to every guest at the table. The soup plates are of elegant porcelain. Then follows a succession of seven or eight dishes of flesh and fish variously cooked, with and without vegetables, and some of them with pastry according to the fashion of French cookery. If the dishes in which they are served are large, the footmen bring small portions of it round, and present them to every guest as with the soup. If the dishes are small, they are presented in succession to the guest, each of whom helps himself from the dish as he pleases. Bottles of French table wines, red and white alternately, and decanters of water are placed on the table between every two persons seated at it, with a tumbler and

a wine glass to each person. But a variety of fine wines are served round by the butler and some of the footmen, between every dish or two that is presented. One glass of each sort of wine is offered to each guest. They usually begin with madeira, to which succeed various French wines, red and white alternately, until champagne is presented with the last dish of flesh. Then come jellies, preserves, fruits, sweetmeats, and last of all ice creams, with a small glass of sweet wine. There are no healths drunk and no toasts, and every guest has as little to do with the drinking as with the eating of another. Among the liquors served round are equally English porter and ale, and frozen punch in champagne glasses. On rising from the table the footmen behind the chairs offer tumblers of green glass filled with water to every guest to wash his mouth and fingers. The company return through the antichamber into the saloon, where they continue standing as before dinner. The servants hand round coffee, and afterwards cordials in glasses not much larger than thimbles, after which each guest drops off one by one without taking leave, or being noticed by any person as he retires. At the head of the staircase he finds the chasseurs and footmen, who the moment he appears call for his servants, one of whom comes to him and puts on his shoop and fur boots, while another goes and orders his carriage up to the door. There stands the Swiss, and at the moment when the carriage drives up opens the door, the guest enters his carriage, and goes home or wherever his business or pleasure calls him.

I said there was no distinction of services at the table, but after the soup until the last dish of flesh emphatically called *roast*, which is always accompanied with a salad and followed by the glass of champagne, the plates in which everything is presented and the dishes are of silver plate, after

which the plates are of the most magnificent china, usually of Sèvres, painted with portraits, views, landscapes or history pieces, no two plates of which are alike. At this period of the repast the silver plates are taken away from before every guest, and in their stead is substituted a plate of this superb porcelain, with a napkin of more beautiful damask than the first served, which is however not taken away, two dessert knives, a fork, a spoon and a *paddle*, all of silver gilt, except the blade of one of the knives which is of steel. The knife with the silver blade is to pare or to cut fruit, that with a steel blade to cut preserves or confectionery, or anything requiring a keener edge than silver. The *paddle* (I call it so from its form, I know not its proper name,) is to take up the liquid jellies, or preserves, or ice creams, which spread themselves over the surface of your plate and might escape the scoop and thickness of a spoon. The second napkin is merely to wipe your lips and fingers when you wash them in rising from table, that which you have used at dinner being supposed less suitable for that purpose.

The attention of the servants to the guests at table is so vigilant that you scarcely ever have occasion to ask for anything. The instant that you have emptied your plate, or that you lay down your knife, and fork, or spoon, your plate is taken away and a clean one is given you in its stead. If you choose to have your knife, fork and spoon changed, you lay them, or either of them, in the plate. If you lay them aside on the cloth, they are not taken away; whenever they are, others are immediately given you with the plate. If you have occasion for a fresh supply of bread, the footmen perceive it at least as soon as you do yourself, and present you a new piece, just as you are ready to call for it. If you take two or three glasses of the various kinds of wine that are handed round, the glasses as you empty them are taken

away without any hint from you. The name of each kind of wine is mentioned to you by the servant who offers it. If you decline taking any dish or glass offered you, there is no occasion to speak, you only raise your hand, or touch the back of your forefinger on the edge of the plate or of the waiter in which it is presented. The servant understands you, and offers the same plate or waiter to the guest seated next you. As several plates are serving from the same dish at once in various parts of the table, the whole company is served in a very few minutes. The conversations of each guest are merely with his next neighbors at table, and in a low voice that they may all be carried on at once. The voice of a servant is never heard, unless to mention the names of the wines as they are offered. The Ambassador and the Chancellor sometimes have a band of music, who occasionally strike up an air or a march at intervals during the dinner; yesterday however there was none.

*Ex uno disce omnes.* I give you the description of an individual for an idea of the genus. All these parade dinners are alike, differing only in some insignificant details. For instance the Ambassador, who is one of the politest men in the world, never pays any attention to any part of the dinner more than any one of the guests. The Chancellor usually himself pours out the sweet wine, the last that is served, two kinds of which he has before him, he calls out to each guest by name, asks him which of the two he will have, and according to his choice sends him a glass by a footman. This you will observe is a mark of special attention, but it is troublesome both to the Chancellor and to the guests. The Ambassador's fashion is more of a piece with the whole system. The servants carry round the sweet wines like all the rest. They offer to each guest the choice of two, but in that as in everything else the master of the house can be

distinguished from the guests while at table only by the seat which he occupies. Everything moves like a piece of clockwork. The dishes, the cookery, the wines are all of the most exquisite inventions of luxury, and yet there is less of intemperance in fifty such feasts, than in one of our dinners succeeded by a carousal of six hours long, swilling upon a mixture of madeira wine and brandy.

## TO THE SECRETARY OF STATE

No. 43. [ROBERT SMITH]

ST. PETERSBURG, 26 March, 1811.

SIR:

In my letter to you of 12 February last, No. 39, I mentioned that of the twenty-three American vessels which had arrived in Russian ports at the close of last season, and the admission of which had been suspended so far as related to the disposal of their cargoes, the papers of seventeen had been returned, and that the cargoes and parts of cargoes which were provided with certificates of origin conformably to the laws of this country were ordered to be admitted. I informed you of the repeated promises, which I had received from Baron Campenhausen (who has since that time been promoted to the office of Comptroller General of the Empire) with regard to the cases upon which the decision was still suspended, and of my reasons for not speaking positively to you concerning them. I had afterwards at various times farther conversations with the Baron, in which the same promises were repeated, and in terms which left me nothing to desire but to see them realized. In the meantime nothing was done and the impatience and uneasiness

of the persons concerned in the property were continually increasing. After waiting upwards of three weeks, I requested a conference with the Chancellor, Count Romanzoff, and on the eighth instant [1] delivered to him a minute containing a statement of all the suspended cases and urging a speedy and favorable decision upon them. The Count intimated some surprise that the decision had been so long delayed, and assured me that he would send an official note to the Baron to hasten his proceedings, which I know he accordingly did. Last Thursday, the 21st instant,[2] I met Baron Campenhausen in company, and he told me that the Emperor's decision had been given the day before; that it was favorable upon all the cases with regard to which I had made representations; that in all the cases where the proper certificates were wanting, the goods should be admitted on the engagement of the persons interested to produce the certificates hereafter; and that in respect of all the other parts of cargoes which were deficient on various points of formality, his Majesty, in consideration that they were cases of *Americans*, had ordered that they should all be admitted. The Baron at the same time expressed much personal regret that the matter had been so long delayed. There is still one case, of a character different from all the rest, and which is not included in this decision. It is of a vessel called the *Eliza*, which arrived last summer from the island of Teneriffe at Archangel. She had the misfortune to have come from the place, from which all the English vessels with the false papers, which were condemned, and the cargoes of which were confiscated last summer, were pretended to have been cleared. And as the papers of a part of her cargo were similar in appearance to those which in the other cases had been detected

[1] The conference is given in the *Memoirs*, under this date.

[2] *Ib.*, where the date has dropped from before the first paragraph on II. 246.

as forgeries, they were unfortunately brought under the same suspicion, and the Commission of Neutral Navigation at Archangel have sentenced it to be confiscated. At the same time, however, the vessel and a part of her cargo have been cleared. The vessel and all the cargo belonged to Mr. Thorndike of Beverly in the state of Massachusetts. As the law stands here, if a part of a ship's cargo upon which false papers are produced is more than half the value of the whole, it subjects the whole to confiscation. If less than half, then the confiscation applies only to the articles falsely documented. The cargo of the *Eliza* consisted of dye-woods and wine. The papers for the wood were found regular; those for the wines incurred the sentence of condemnation. It became a question whether the value of the wines constituted more or less than half that of the whole cargo. The Commission adjudged it to be less and therefore cleared the wood. But from this part of the sentence the imperial procurer or public attorney appealed to the Council of the empire, while Mr. Thorndike's agent appealed from the part which sentenced the wine to condemnation. In the minute which I delivered to Count Romanzoff on the 8th instant, I included the statement of the *Eliza's* case with the rest; but as it must come separately for the consideration of the Council, it was not determined with them, and Baron Campenhausen informed me, that it would be necessarily delayed some time longer. He led me however to expect, that the eventual decision of the Imperial Council would be as favorable in this case as in the others.

I mentioned in a former letter the recall of the French Ambassador, who has resided upwards of three years at this court, and the appointment of a General Count Lauriston, as his successor. The misunderstandings between the cabinets of St. Petersburg and Paris have become so con-

siderable and so notorious, that this event contributes to excite the uneasiness of those who were already apprehensive of a speedy rupture between France and Russia. The Duke de Vicence has during the whole of his embassy here been treated by the Emperor Alexander with a degree of favor and until lately of confidence, which he never showed to any other ambassador. He has on his own part constantly endeavored to conciliate the sentiments of the principal persons of the Empire towards France, and although their aversions were too deeply rooted to render this a practicable task, he succeeded at least in making himself personally as agreeable as to any individual of his nation in the same situation would have been possible. In supporting to the utmost of his ability the influence of France with this government he had contracted attachments, which led him to estimate very highly the importance of harmony between his country and Russia, and to give all its weight to the Russian side of the discussion between them. He was sincerely and anxiously desirous of preserving peace and among the conjectured reasons of his recall it has been surmised that he has not urged the late demands and pretentions of France here with sufficient energy for the satisfaction of his master. The reason assigned in the French official gazette for his recall is the state of his health and his own repeated solicitations. His health, without being perfectly good, is hardly infirm enough to serve as more than the pretext for a resignation.[1] It is not probable that this consideration alone has occasioned his sudden and unexpected recall (such it certainly was to himself) at this period so universally viewed as critical in the relations between the two countries. The personal respect and attention shown him by the Emperor and the

[1] See despatches from Caulaincourt to the Duc de Cadore in Vandal, *Napoléon et Alexandre I*, II. 553–559.

Chancellor have not suffered any abatement, and the most magnificent present ever made to an ambassador on his departure from this port is by the Emperor's order preparing for him. It is probable that the first occasion upon which the influence, which he had so long exercised here, failed of success was that upon which Count Romanzoff told me that the attachment of the Russian government to the United States was more obstinate than I was aware of. The next was in the permission to the late king of Sweden to embark from Riga. Then came the refusal to adopt the French tariff of prohibitory duties upon all colonial merchandises: and the *auto-da-fé* of English manufactures: then the refusal to confiscate or even to exclude the American vessels from Gothenburg under pretence that they were English property in disguise: and lastly the Russian tariff and manifest respecting commerce during the present year, which as was anticipated has given great dissatisfaction at Paris. On the other hand his inability to give satisfaction to the Russian government upon any of the numerous and important causes of complaint, which France has given to Russia; the detection of his correspondence with a Russian officer,[1] which occasioned the arrest and exile of that officer; and the direct violation of the treaty of Tilsit in the spoliation committed upon the Duke of Oldenburg, with the known intrigue of the French chargé d'affaires at Constantinople to prevent the peace with Turkey, have all concurred to shake his credit and to make the substitution of another person in his stead as desirable as it may be expedient for the present purposes of his government. It remains to be seen what tone of negotiation will be assumed by his successor, whose arrival is expected in a fortnight or three weeks. Count Chernicheff, a confidential officer of the Emperor

[1] General Hitroff, p. 14, *supra*.

Alexander, who had been dispatched about three months ago to Paris, arrived here last week with a letter expressive of the most friendly sentiments from the Emperor Napoleon and is this day gone again with the reply.[1] The Emperor himself is gone this day on a visit to his sister at Twer. He is expected to return this day week. General Kamensky is recalled from the army in Turkey, to the command of which General Kutuzuff is appointed in his stead. It is understood that the campaign in Turkey is to be merely defensive. A part of the army has been withdrawn to reinforce the Polish frontier. I am, etc.

## TO THE SECRETARY OF STATE

No. 44. [JAMES MONROE][2]

ST. PETERSBURG, April 3, 1811.

SIR:

Mr. Harris arrived here a few days since, returning from his tour to Archangel and Moscow, and since his arrival has received a letter from Mr. John Speyer at Stockholm, mentioning that he was accredited as commercial agent for the United States in Sweden, and intended to reside principally at that capital. He requests Mr. Harris to communicate this information to me, and to add that American property would be duly protected by the government of that kingdom.

[1] Napoleon's letter was dated February 28, 1811, and the reply of Alexander, March 25, 1811. The mission of Chernicheff, or Tchernitcheff, and Napoleon's conversations with him are related in Tatistcheff, *Alexandre I et Napoléon*, III. 533.

[2] Robert Smith was removed from the Department of State by the President and James Monroe took office April 2. The change was not known to Adams until June.

If Mr. Speyer's commission extends to all Sweden, I should hope that he will give a regular authority to some proper person to act in the consular capacity at Gothenburg; a place during the two last years of more commercial importance than Stockholm, and concerning which I have repeatedly had the honor of writing to you. Notwithstanding all the reproaches and all the menaces on the part of France to the Swedish government, the communication between the port of Gothenburg and England by the means of the packets is still regularly maintained. For the bay of Gothenburg, the packets have only substituted as a landing place the island of Anholt, a small spot in the Cattegat, belonging to Denmark, and of which the English took possession in the summer of 1809. It has no harbor, but furnishes the means of communication with the Swedish coast, which it has not yet been found practicable to prevent. Through this channel there are now letters and newspapers in this city down to the 5th of March, and by publications in the English gazettes, some accounts from the United States as late as 30 January.

The intelligence from England occasions much uncertainty here with regard to the state of navigation in the Baltic during the ensuing season. It is stated as the intention of the British government to grant no licenses to ports within the Baltic, and to send into that sea a larger force than they had in it the last year. These circumstances have excited an apprehension, which is still further excited by rumors invented for purposes of mercantile speculation, that the design of the British government is to declare a general blockade of the Baltic; a measure which nothing can render probable, and I had almost said, possible, excepting that it would be the most injudicious step they could take. It would, however, be altogether congenial to the determination

which the newspapers announce to have been communicated to Mr. Pinkney, of a direct and categorical refusal to revoke the orders in council, or the system of paper blockade, until the decrees of Berlin and Milan shall have been really repealed.

It is suggested that the delays of the British government to grant licenses to ports within the Baltic have arisen from the seizures and confiscation of the merchandize which came in licensed vessels the last year, and from the sequestrations of those which came with the last convoy in November from Gothenburg, scarcely any of which except the Americans have yet been admitted, and a considerable number of which are upon trial. English licenses it is conjectured will not be granted, unless some pledge, or at least some tacit engagement, be given to secure the property from a similar fate in future. Some of the merchants here lately presented to the Emperor a petition to grant *licenses* on his part under the protection of which no enquiry should be made whence the vessels came, or under what colors she was navigated. In support of this petition the example of France was alleged, but its prayer was immediately rejected by the Emperor. This circumstance which very recently occurred has contributed much to silence the rumors of an immediate peace with England, and war with France which were circulated with so much confidence and such strength of notorious facts to support them, that it was not without some hesitation that I wrote you on the 12th of February, that in my opinion this event was not to be soon expected. The preparations for war have nevertheless been continued on both sides from that time to the present without intermission, and there are now upwards of two hundred thousand Russian troops on the frontier line of Prussia and Poland. The Duke of Oldenburg is coming here. You will probably

receive from Paris the most authentic accounts of what is passing there between the Russian embassy and the French government. *I am assured that Prince Kurakin was ordered to present a strong remonstrance against the annexation of that Prince's territories to the French empire; that the paper was sent back to him by the Duke de Cadore with a declaration that it could not be received, the measure having already received the sanction of a senatus consultum; that Prince Kurakin by taking back the remonstrance gave some dissatisfaction to the Emperor Alexander; that a new order has been dispatched to him by Count Chernicheff to send anew the remonstrance or another, couched in still stronger terms, and if it should again be denied a reception to send copies of it officially to all the other foreign ministers at Paris. I mention this more as an indication that this is one of the principal subjects of irritated discussion between the two governments than from my own belief of the facts. These I believe are exaggerated. It appears impossible that the tone of negotiation from Paris should already be so near to hostility, while that from St. Petersburg continues to be so amicable.*[1] The Emperor Alexander and Count Romanzoff have expressed to various persons their satisfaction at the appointment of Count Lauriston as the successor to the Duke de Vicence, and the unusual compliment has already been paid him of sending an officer to meet him at the frontier town of Polangen.

*With regard to the new Russian manifest and tariff, the operation of which will be so unfavorable to the commerce of France, it is probable that it will terminate in a negotiation for a treaty of commerce between the two countries. A proposition of that nature has already been made I believe on the part of France, and has been assented to by this government. The project, however, is yet but in embryo. If it should be pursued, I hope*

[1] Cypher.

*to give you an account of its progress, but it will undoubtedly be subordinate to the course of political events.*[1]

I expect daily to hear of the arrival of Mr. Erving at Copenhagen, and wish that he may meet there a disposition more favorable to the claims of our countrymen, than has been recently manifested by the Danish government. A petition to the king for a delay of the decision of several American cases involving a very large amount of property until that gentleman should arrive, has been rejected and the final sentences of condemnation have been issued. The cases from Norway of the vessels captured there last July have no better prospects before them. This state of things presents an aspect of renewed danger to the American vessels which have been wintering in the Russian ports, and concerning which I have so often had occasion to write to you. Probably the navigation will be open for their homeward voyages in June. *But the possibility of their passage through the Sound or the Belt will depend upon the pleasure or upon the instructions of the English naval force in the Baltic.*[1] . . .

I am with great respect, etc.

## TO THOMAS BOYLSTON ADAMS

St. Petersburg, 10 April, 1811.

You observe in your letter of 24 September last, that my son George was losing much of his French conversation idiom; that is precisely one of the things upon which I had most earnestly set my heart in his education. Walter Shandy, Esq., was of opinion that there was a great and mysterious virtue in the name given to a child. He intended to call his son

[1] Cypher.

Trismegistus, and the name above all other names which he abhorred was Tristram. Alas, by trusting at the critical moment his child to that leaky vessel Susanna, that very execrated name was fastened upon the luckless wight for life, and, as you remember, that was not the first disaster of that child of afflictions, whose misfortunes began nine months before he was born.

Mr. Shandy's disappointments often come into my mind in reflecting upon my own. Before I had any children I fancied myself so well qualified for conducting an education, that I had various thoughts of writing and publishing a treatise upon the subject. Mr. Locke, who had no children of his own, and Jean Jacques, who sent his children to the foundling hospital, had set the example, and it has been followed by Miss Hannah More and Miss Edgeworth, and Miss Wolstonecraft, and Madame de Genlis, and I know not how many more masters and misses, who never had any children of their own, or at least none that they had brought into the world honestly. If I had gone childless through life, there is an even chance that I should have been one of the education mongers. But I very soon found after George was born, first, that a child is not itself a piece of clay to be moulded according to the fancy of every potter; and secondly, that the clay, such as it is, was not committed exclusively to me, to be fashioned upon my taste alone. Yet I have not lost a particle of my anxiety for the education of my children, nor have I neglected when with them such attention to it as I have been able to bestow. The French language was one of the things, and indeed almost the only thing, for teaching them which I depended chiefly upon myself. George had a foundation of it laid, which I hoped he would never lose; but John's delicate state of health, and his absence from us which has been almost continual ever since he was of an

age capable of learning anything, have very much to my regret deprived him of the same advantage.

I have adhered very generally to the practice, both with George and Charles, of speaking nothing to them but French myself. Charles in consequence of this system is now learning to speak it as well as could be expected from a child of his age, though from female servants in the family, with whom he passes most of his time, he learns much more German upon which I had not calculated, though I am very glad he is acquiring it. He is slowest at the French, because he learns it only from me; but he is making progress, and will shame his eldest brother when we come home, if George does not take care to keep enough of his French to talk it with him.

Of George's general proficiency you say Mr. Whitney speaks well. This gives me pleasure and I have the fullest confidence both in Mr. Whitney's attention to his progress and in the accuracy of his report. But I wish to learn what *you* or *my father* say of his general proficiency, that is, in the studies which he is pursuing under Mr. Whitney's direction. I want him to pass an examination at least as often as once a month before my father or you, serving as a review from time to time of his studies. Not an examination how he can construe such a line in Virgil or parse such a verse of the Greek Testament, as may have been prepared for him and he for them a day before hand, but an examination of his mind, and not merely of his memory. The most essential part of education after all is to teach a child to think. Perhaps, too, it is the most difficult. Let George write me an account of what he is studying, but do not let him get anybody else to write it for him. It is high time for him to be under the necessity of writing his own letters.

I am very glad that you obtained *at last* the fifty copies of my lectures for which I had stipulated, and of which I have

requested you to make distribution. If it should not be completed before you receive this, I recommend it again particularly to your care. It is a friendly attention which I am the more earnest to show to the persons named upon the list I sent you, because in my absence it is the best token of remembrance that I can send them. And it is only while the work is a novelty that I can suppose the present would be acceptable. You mention that you had been applied to concerning a second edition. But if there ever should be a real call for that, I presume it will not be for some years, and that I shall have time to return home and to give the whole book such a revision, as will remove some of its imperfections and make it more worthy of the public eye. I cannot, indeed, reproach myself for any neglect in its composition. It is the measure of my powers, under the circumstances and the occupations of a different nature in the midst of which it was written. But its publication you know was premature, and I have been, and still am, so distrustful of its success, that I shall wait for the indication which the demand for a new edition would afford, to ascertain whether I ought to devote any more of my time and labor to its improvement. It is now my expectation to return to the United States the next year, and when I come I hope to have leisure for literary pursuits. I have as many projects of this kind floating in my mind as Charles Fox had while (to speak like the *Anthology* critic) he was running after a barren and withering chaplet of political renown.[1] Literature, the education of my children and the familiar intercourse of my friends at Quincy, are the pictures which my imagination draws in the most glowing colors, and on which it dwells with the purest delight in forming my prospects of futurity. As for the law, the little metal I ever had of it has gathered such an inveterate rust,

[1] See Vol. III, 514 *n*, *supra*.

that it will never take an edge or a polish again. But if the servile drudgery of caucuses, the savage buffeting of elections, the filth and venom of newspaper and pulpit calumny, and the dastardly desertion of such friends as *Anthology* critics and Boston legislators, are to be my lot as it has been in time past, I shall with the blessing of God live through it again as I have done before, but I shall almost regret the stagnant political atmosphere and the Scythian winters of St. Petersburg. There is a possibility that we may return home in the course of the ensuing summer, but this is not probable, nor in the present situation of my family desirable. The only time in which it is *possible* to embark from this spot for a voyage through the Baltic, is from the first of June to the last of October, and the navigation during the last two of these five months is so dangerous, that nothing short of the extremest urgency could induce me to embark with a wife and child later than the first days of September. Whether we could embark earlier this season is uncertain, and at any rate we shall not attempt it, unless my orders from the United States should make it indispensable.

. . . . . .

I had heard of the decease of President Webber even before the date of your letter, but that of Judge Cushing had not been announced to us until this information from you. They were both good and respectable men, and the judge had been an able man in his profession. The place at the University is more than supplied by Dr. Kirkland, who I hope will not be more of a politician than his predecessor. The prophet who told you the successor Judge Cushing would have had, if I had been at his funeral, was not well inspired. Without pretending to any extraordinary degree of self-knowledge, I am conscious of too little law even for practice at the bar, still less should I feel myself qualified for the

bench of the Supreme Court of the United States. I am also, and always shall be, too much of a political partisan for a judge; and although I know as well as any man in America how and when to lay the partisan aside, I do not wish to be called so often and so completely to do it, as my own sense of duty would call me, were I seated upon the bench. Besides all which there was another man whom I should have considered as the natural successor to Judge Cushing, so fully entitled to the place, and so entirely deserving of it, that I should have considered my occupation of it to the exclusion of him as an atrocious usurpation. I know not whether the government has been sufficiently sensible of his merit to place him in, but I know that nothing could have induced me to take it, while he would have been overlooked in this appointment. You understand me to speak of Judge Davis, one of the men that I have ever known whom I most love and esteem. . . .

## TO THE SECRETARY OF STATE

No. 45. [JAMES MONROE]

ST. PETERSBURG, 13 April, 1811.

SIR:

In some of the English newspapers which have been received here of as late a date as 19 March I find the only accounts from the United States that have reached us since the 4th of January, when I received your favor of 16 October, 1810, and among them I perceive a correspondence between you and General Turreau, respecting the certificates of origin delivered by the French consuls in the United States; a subject which you will see renewed in a large proportion

of my dispatches from the 16th of August last to this day.[1]

The official gazette of the French government, the *Moniteur*, of the 10th of July 1810, contained an article of which the following is an exact translation:

> American vessels present themselves at the ports of the North Sea, and of the Baltic, furnished with pretended certificates of origin from French consuls. We are officially authorized to declare that these certificates are false and that the possessors of them must be considered as forgers. These papers are manifestly fabricated in England; for the consuls of his Majesty in America have long since ceased to deliver any such certificates.

When in my letter to you of 16 August, noticing this official declaration, and its inaccuracy in point of fact, I added that probably the consuls had been ordered to deliver no such certificates for the future, I really did not suspect that even until that day no such order had ever been sent.

The letter from General Turreau to you is not published in the English papers;[2] but from your reply, it appears that he had acknowledged the issuing of certificates by the consuls until the 13th of November, when they ceased to deliver them by an order from the Duke de Cadore, dated 31 August, 1810

Your letter alludes in general terms to the inconveniences and odious suspicions which Americans were suffering in Denmark for want of a candid and explicit declaration by the French government to that of Denmark, of the real fact. But

[1] "The only way that I get any news from America is through the English newspapers." Ms. Diary. He noted an unusually short run of fifty-four days from America.

[2] The correspondence was printed in *The* (London) *Times*, February 18, 1811; *Am. State Papers*, Foreign Relations, III. 400.

you were not then informed of the like inconveniences and suspicions which other fair Americans were suffering in the Russian ports, not from the omission of the French government to give a true declaration, but from the official repetition of the same false declaration, which had been published in the *Moniteur* of 10 July, in a petition solemnly announced by the French consul to the Russian government more than two months after I had remonstrated to the French Ambassador here against it. The Ambassador promised me at the time, that he would immediately communicate to his government my observations on the subject. He has since assured me that he did communicate them. The only answer was an order to the consul, Mr. Lesseps, to renew the declaration which is now demonstrated to have been unfounded.

Of the sequestrations in France, under the Berlin and Milan decrees, of all the American merchant vessels which have arrived there since the Duke de Cadore declared on the 5th of August last that those decrees were revoked, I shall say nothing, because excepting the letters of Mr. Russell relative to the seizure of the *New Orleans Packet* at Bordeaux in December, which likewise appear in the English newspapers, I have no authentic information of anything which has lately been done in France concerning American affairs. But there are some circumstances which have not hitherto been mentioned in my correspondence with you, and which it is now proper to notice, as they are perhaps equally characteristic of principles and practice with those which mark the above transactions.

Some months after my arrival here, it was intimated to me, through a third person,[1] from the French Ambassador, that most of the difficulties which prevented an amicable

[1] Six d'Oterbeck. See Adams, *Memoirs*, August 17, 1810.

settlement of all the differences between the United States and France, arose from the American Minister in France, who had made himself personally disagreeable, and it was suggested to me that it would be advisable that I should give notice of this to the government of the United States. I did not feel inclined to become the reporter to my own government, of a complaint against an official colleague, so vague in substance and so indirect in form. I paid no attention to it. About two months afterwards, that is, on the 17th of August last, the same person who had made the first insinuation to me, renewed it with more earnestness and precision, adding that the Ambassador himself would readily converse with me on the subject, if I wished it. There was an additional hint disclosed at this time, sufficiently clear to indicate purposes of which it might be convenient to make me the instrument: which was, that I was myself the most suitable person to take the place of the gentleman against whom I was to be the secret informer. I asked what was the particular cause of complaint which General Armstrong had given to the French government. The answer was that they did not impeach his integrity, but that he was morose, captious and petulant. I was now convinced more than ever of the impropriety of the part with which I was desired to charge myself, and explicitly declined it.[1]

On the 22nd of the same month of August, I met the Ambassador at court, and he introduced the subject in a private conversation with me of his own accord. He assured me, and formally requested me to write to the government of the United States, that it was the strongest desire of the Em-

[1] "Charge the Duc de Vicence to tell Mr. Adams that we have here an American minister who says nothing; that we need an active man whom one can comprehend, and by whose means we could come to an understanding with the Americans." *Napoleon to Champagny*, July 13, 1810. See Henry Adams, *History*, V. 253.

peror of France and of his Ministers to come to terms of perfect harmony with the United States. That they considered our interests as altogether the same; and that if *any other person* than General Armstrong were at Paris, on the part of the United States, all the differences between the two countries might be settled with the utmost facility, and entirely to the satisfaction of the American government. I told him that this would certainly be pleasing intelligence to my government, which I should not fail to communicate to you; that I regretted very much, as I had no doubt the President would regret, that any displeasure should have been conceived by the Emperor of France or his government, at anything in the conduct of the American Minister in France; but if this was to be mentioned by me, you would doubtless expect that the cause of offence which had been given should be specified. "*C'est d'abord un très galant homme*," said the Ambassador; but he never shews himself, and upon every little occasion, when by a verbal explanation with the Minister he might obtain anything, he presents peevish notes."

On the 13th of September I had another and much longer conversation with the Ambassador at his own house, where I had requested to see him for the purpose of expostulating against the official declaration discrediting the certificates of the French consuls in America. I have mentioned this interview to you in one of my former letters. At this time we were informed of the professed revocation of the Berlin and Milan decrees. And I urged strongly upon the Ambassador the inconsistency between such professions as those in the Duke de Cadore's letter, which had then just been published, and such measures as that declaration, and the exclusion of American vessels from the ports of Prussia, Holstein and Mecklenburg, at the instance of France. He

said that his government had not instructed him with regard to those measures, and had only directed him to make the complaint against General Armstrong, which he again requested me to write to the American government.

I repeated the observation that in transmitting information of such a nature, it was obvious that any other channel would be more delicate than through a person standing in such an official relation to General Armstrong as I then did. And above all that something specific should be alleged to warrant a direct complaint of this kind. He repeated in substance what he had said before: that Mr. Armstrong scarcely ever went to see the Minister (the Duke de Cadore); that he never went to court; and that whenever anything was to be done, he was presenting testy notes, which made written answers of the same sort indispensable, and which widened matters, when by verbal explanations they might be conciliated. But, he added, that he did not consider the complaints as of a nature to injure the character of General Armstrong at home, and that perhaps after all the real cause had not been alleged to him, the Ambassador.

I considered this last observation as a tacit admission that the causes which had been assigned to him, with instructions so gravely to request that I should report to you the complaint against my colleague, were too frivolous to bear examination, or to warrant a procedure so unfriendly to him. General Armstrong's note to the Duke de Cadore of 10 March, 1810, was now published throughout Europe, and was admired wherever it had been read. I had no difficulty in understanding the uneasiness which such notes might have occasioned to the French Minister of Foreign Affairs; but I felt myself more than ever unsuitable to be the messenger of his ill humors. I determined however at a proper time to inform you of the whole transaction, leav-

ing to you the inferences which it may be useful to draw from it. I have been particular in noticing the dates, from the curiosity of a comparison between this diplomatic expedient, and the manifestations of the French government, towards the gentleman against whom it was pointed, precisely at the same period. The personal attentions of the Duke de Cadore at that very time were such as to call forth the General's public acknowledgments, and on his appearance at court, the Emperor himself noticed him with such peculiar distinction that it was marked by the whole diplomatic circle. It has been mentioned to me by a gentleman now here, and attached to the Austrian mission, but who was then at Paris, and present at the court. He says that the Emperor's extraordinary notice of General Armstrong excited the more attention, because it was immediately after the appearance of that note, which had so boldly spoken to his government the language of a truly independent nation. I am with high respect, etc.

## TO THE SECRETARY OF STATE

No. 46. [JAMES MONROE]

ST. PETERSBURG, 22 April, 1811.

SIR:

For upwards of a month I had not found an opportunity of forwarding dispatches for you to any place whence they could be transmitted, until at the close of the last week, when that of a Russian courier dispatched to Paris gave me the means of enclosing a packet to Mr. Russell. I therefore sent under cover to him a packet for you, containing

copies of my last three letters, and a few lines in cipher to the President of the United States.

I have now the opportunity of writing by Mr. Preuss, an American citizen who brought me last summer dispatches from your Department; and who now proposes to return to the United States.

From the day which terminated the last war between France and Austria, and still more from that which so soon succeeded it, of a family alliance between the French Emperor and the imperial house of Austria, it has been the general expectation of all men who speculate upon the future destinies of mankind, with a general knowledge of the state of things, and with the habit of calculating the operations of the sanguinary passions, to which the occurrences of the times have given such unbounded scope, that the next terrible conflict upon the continent of Europe would be between France and Russia—*a conflict for which France with a policy rather wily than profound had already been preparing in the consent that Russia should enlarge her boundaries at the expense of Austria and Sweden.*[1] The course of events hitherto has been altogether conformable to this expectation. On concluding the peace with Austria the Emperor Napoleon wrote to the Emperor of Russia a letter, saying that he had determined to make once more the experiment of sparing Austria, congratulating the Emperor Alexander upon his acquisition of Finland, and solemnly promising never to raise an insurrection against him in Poland. This last passage was if not a binding engagement at least an intelligible insinuation. *The negotiation for the Emperor Napoleon's marriage was not only conducted with so much secrecy that neither the Russian government nor either of their ambassadors at Paris had a suspicion of the person contemplated as*

[1] Cypher.

*the imperial consort of France, but their conjectures were intentionally led to a very different direction. Two years before a similar proposition had been made, and the hand of the Grand Duchess Catharine, the Emperor Alexander's sister, had been solicited and denied. This Princess is since married to Prince George of Oldenburg, the son of that very Duke of Oldenburg whose territories are now by a direct violation of the treaty of Tilsit incorporated with the French Empire; and when the contract of marriage with the Arch Duchess Maria Louisa was all but signed, the Russian Ambassador was communicating to his court that the Emperor Napoleon's intended bride was a daughter of the Duke of Modena.*[1]

At the time when the marriage was solemnized the Austrian Prime Minister, Count Metternich, was sent upon an extraordinary mission to Paris, where he remained more than six months without accomplishing anything which could require the agency of a person thus distinguished, particularly while another Ambassador in form from Austria was residing at Paris. The mission of such a minister, at such a moment, naturally excited the attention of all Europe, and especially of the Russian government. At first and indeed during the whole time that Count Metternich remained at Paris, it was given out, and somewhat studiously, both from the French and Austrian legations here, that the object of his mission was to set on foot a negotiation for a general peace, in which Austria was to assume the part of a mediator.

*But it was not long before the Russian government had notice that projects by no means friendly to this country were interwoven with the professed attempt at a pacific negotiation, and since the Count's return to Vienna, Austria has been content to have it circulated as a diplomatic secret that the proposition*

[1] Cypher. The reference is to Maria Beatrice, only daughter of Hercules III, who married Ferdinand of Austria, son of Maria Theresa.

*of an alliance offensive and defensive against Russia was made to her by France and rejected. It is probable that France had reckoned a little too much upon the deep resentments of Austria against Russia for the part which she had taken in the recent war, and in her eagerness to recover, while enjoying the sweet of revenge, that territory of four hundred thousand souls which had rewarded the inaction of Russia under the guise of her alliance with France in the short war of 1809.*[1]

Count Metternich returned home in October, from which time until this day the coolness between France and Russia has been increasing until it is at the point of appearing in the form of war. The provocations which have been multiplied on the part of France almost every week through the winter, the resistance of Russia to the demands of France, her measures of commercial retaliation and her preparations for war, have been mentioned to you in many of my former dispatches, but I have still hoped that the war would be deferred, if not ultimately averted, because I knew that such was the earnest wish of the Emperor Alexander, and his most confidential minister, Count Romanzoff, and because the preparations on the part of France, although considerable, have not been such as to indicate the intention of commencing the war immediately.

*Even now the hope of preserving peace is not absolutely abandoned, but its last beam is quivering on the point of extinction. The resolution to resign his office is already taken by Count Romanzoff, and waits only [the] answer to the instructions carried by Count Chernicheff to Paris. The conjectures of political speculators are busy in designating the probable successor to his power, a point which must undoubtedly be determined in the Emperor's mind, but which is yet undivulged. The generals to whom the principal commands will be given in*

[1] Cypher.

*the event of a war are also named, doubtless by anticipation. They are Count Kamensky, the late commander in chief of the Moldavian army, who enjoys at this time the first military reputation in Russia. He is under forty years of age, but is unfortunately still at Bucharest by the consequences of a fever. His predecessor in that command, Prince Bagration, deemed an excellent officer for a subordinate command, yielded. He is now here, and General Bennigsen,*[1] *who was distinguished in the last war with France, but now resides on his estates at a distance from the imperial residence. His reputation is also high, but the experience of the present and recent wars of Europe has passed some disfavor on commanders in chief of his age. He is little short of seventy. These are the leaders of brightest fame which the Russian Empire has to oppose against the Emperor Napoleon in person, and a long train of his lieutenants, spurred not only by the example of his fortune, the long and constant habit of victory and the actual enjoyment of its fruits in wealth and glory, but by the dazzling glances of crowns and sceptres sporting in visions before them, and glowing with the color of like visions already realized to more than one of their fellow soldiers. It would perhaps be possible for Russia to bring into the field armies as numerous and troops at least as trusty as those which will follow the eagles of France; but as to the great result of European war in these times it has been demonstrated that the men are nothing, the officers all. If the war should now commence, I believe that neither Austria nor Sweden will immediately take a part in it. I am at least sure that no apprehension of that sort is entertained here, although insinuations are circulated at Paris that Sweden will co-operate with France, and has disclosed at Paris some secrets of Russia. But this may perhaps only be the counterpart of that threat which France used to extort from Sweden the declaration*

[1] Levin Augusti-Théophile Bennigsen (1745–1826).

*of war against England. Sweden was then told that if she hesitated she should be attacked by Russia, when Russia had not the most distant idea of attacking Sweden.*[1]

But when the war once begins undoubtedly there will be no exertion spared by France to draw both Sweden and Austria into it, on the side of France. I know not whether the measures are to be considered as preparatory to this event, but the king of Sweden has resigned all the essential part of his executive power into the hands of the Crown Prince, and Austria has scaled her national bank paper at five for one. . . .

## TO THE SECRETARY OF STATE

No. 47. [JAMES MONROE]

ST. PETERSBURG, 29 April, 1811.

SIR:

With the last letter which I had the honor of writing you was inclosed a translation of the arrangement agreed upon between Count Romanzoff and the chargé d'affaires of Portugal at this court: but which remains suspended until the arrival of the minister plenipotentiary from the Prince Regent of Portugal, who is shortly expected.

The first treaty of commerce between Portugal and Russia was concluded the 9/20 December, 1787, for twelve years, and was renewed with several modifications for twelve years more the 16/27 December, 1798. By the 6th article of this treaty, all wines of the growth of Portugal, or of the islands of Madeira or the Azores, imported into Russia in Portuguese or Russian vessels, for account of Portuguese or Russian

[1] Cypher.

subjects, were to pay only four rubles and fifty copecks a hogshead import duty: but if imported in vessels of any other nation, they were to pay according to the general tariff of 1790.

Further, the privilege was stipulated, that six thousand lasts of Portuguese salt might annually be imported in Portuguese vessels into the ports of Russia and pay only half the amount of the duties prescribed by the general tariff upon the same article. By the 7th article of the same treaty Portuguese or Russian merchants were to pay only one-half the import duties prescribed by the general tariff and ordinances of Portugal upon the articles of hemp, flax, or hempseed, hemp or linseed oil, iron of all dimensions, anchors, cannon balls, and bombs, provided they should be of the produce of Russia and imported directly into Portugal in Russian or Portuguese vessels for the account of Portuguese or Russian subjects. If imported in the vessels of other nations, they were to pay the full amount of the duties, according to the tariff.

By the 8th article a similar diminution of one-half the import duties was stipulated upon the direct importation of Russian sail-cloth, hemp, ravensducks and drillings into Portugal, and of Portuguese olive oil and Brazil indigo, tobacco and snuff imported into Russia by the vessels and for the account of the subjects of either of the two nations. By the 9th article it was agreed, that as there were other goods and merchandizes of the growth and manufactures of the two countries, their colonies, dominions and conquests, which might increase the navigation and commerce between them and contribute to their mutual advantage, the ministers of the two parties were to examine and confer upon them, and that whatever might be adjusted and agreed upon in this respect, should be drawn up in the form of new

articles, which, approved and ratified, should become a part of the treaty.

Since the peace of Tilsit, the removal of the royal family and court of Portugal to Brazil, and the invasion of Portugal by the French, the political and commercial circumstances of both the parties to this treaty have rendered the modifications anticipated in this 9th article expedient to the present interest and purposes of both. In consequence of the connexions, which Russia had contracted with France she was prevailed upon to forbid all direct commercial communication between her own dominions and Portugal, on the ground that it was a country occupied by the forces of Great Britain, a power with whom she was at war. But this prohibition was not extended to Brazil or any of the Portuguese colonies or possessions out of Europe. On the other hand, by the removal of the house of Braganza to America, a new interest had arisen, prompting the substitution on their part of other articles for the enjoyment of privileges when imported into Russia, instead of the wine, oil, and salt of Portugal, and these were precisely those colonial articles which could no longer be sent by exclusive prerogative to Portugal, as to a mother country, and which England in the obstinacy of adherence to her colonial system, even now under the treaty of Rio Janeiro, refuses to admit. By the present agreement therefore, the wine, oil and salt of Portugal cease to enjoy the diminution of duties, stipulated by the treaty of 1798, instead of which the same privilege is transferred to the articles of sugar, coffee, cocoa, dye-wood, rice, cochineal, pepper, cinnamon and medicinal drugs, the produce of Brazil or of other possessions of the Prince Regent of Portugal. The privileges, secured to the indigo, tobacco and snuff of Brazil are confirmed. Madeira wines and those of the Azore Islands, instead of four rubles fifty copecks the hogs-

head, at which they were taxed by the treaty of 1798, are to pay under the new Russian tariff twenty rubles the hogshead, and in the case of any further modifications of this tariff, they are still to pay only one-fourth of the duties charged upon other wines, or upon those, when imported by other than Russian or Portuguese vessels, and for account of Portuguese or Russian subjects. They are taxed in the new tariff at eighty rubles the hogshead. The increase of duty from four and one-half to twenty rubles is rather nominal than real, for as they are paid in the depreciated bank paper, which passes current at four for one, twenty rubles at this time are worth very little more in gold or silver than four and a half rubles were in 1798.

In the present situation of things it is of no material importance to the navigation and commerce either of Portugal or Russia, whether this new convention should be definitely concluded or not. But I have been thus particular in stating the parallel between the old treaty and the new agreement, and in explaining the causes of the alteration, because the principle of this change in the commercial relations between Portugal and Russia may hereafter be by no means indifferent to the commercial interests of the United States. The articles of sugar and rice at least are productions of the United States as well as of Brazil, and under the present Russian tariff a diminution of one-half the duty on sugar would give an advantage in the competition, which might easily operate to exclude from the market, those who would remain subject to the payment of the full duty. The Methuen treaty between Portugal and England was probably the model from which these articles in the first treaty of commerce between Russia and Portugal were imitated.

*It is probable that if a treaty of commerce between the United States and Russia should be contemplated during the adminis-*

*tration of Count Romanzoff that he would agree to similar stipulations in favor of our vessels and productions upon the like reciprocal conditions. I have repeatedly received intimations of a similar nature to those which I mentioned in my letter of 5th September last (No. 23), but the Count has never said anything explicit to me on this subject himself, and now should the full power and instructions which I then requested be sent me, it is doubtful whether I could avail myself of them before a change of administration here will take place.*

*The accounts from Paris received here are to the 7th instant. No act of direct hostility and no public manifestation of a rupture between the two countries had then occurred there nor has any yet taken place here. But there and here the war is considered as inevitable and every arrangement for it is making as speedily as possible by both governments. There are a multitude of rumors in secret circulation, the authenticity of which I do not consider as sufficiently clear to mention them at present to you; but things all concur in proving that the catastrophe is near at hand. It is not improbable that on one side or the other the blow will at least accompany if not precede the word.*[1]

I have the honour to be, etc.

## TO THOMAS BOYLSTON ADAMS

ST. PETERSBURG, 29 April, 1811.

. . . . . .

Your letter of 24 September is yet the last which I have received, and from my dear mother I have none later than 25 July. As the world of waters is again open before us, I hope we shall now hear from you very often during the navi-

[1] Cypher.

gating season. At least I have no doubt but we shall have vessels from the United States arriving in swarms, if the English, the French, the Danes, and Swedes will let them come. Indeed they might dispense with the permission of all these nations except the first, but without their leave none will reach a Russian port. The trade, however, according to all appearances will be good for nothing, and much more probably a source of loss than of profit. First, because it will be, as it already is, overstocked, and secondly, because it will ere long labor under the double burthen of highly aggravated duties, and of English fellow customers in competition. They hitherto have been excluded, but as an immediate war between France and Russia is considered as unavoidable, the peace between Russia and Great Britain will follow of course. I can hardly say this to you now without indiscretion, because to this day there has been no public manifestation of the slightest misunderstanding between the cabinets of the Tuileries and of St. Petersburg. But you know the fashion of modern war is to strike before they speak, and it is highly probable that you will hear of actual hostilities between the Russian and French armies before you receive this letter. The condition of the ports on the Baltic and Gulf of Finland will then depend upon the fortunes of the campaign. On this subject I do not think it prudent to say more at present.

We are hourly in expectation of hearing the arrival of Mr. Livingston,[1] as Minister to France, and of Mr. Erving,[2] in the same capacity at Copenhagen. Neither of these gentlemen will find his mission a bed of roses. The one will be extremely dependent as to its result upon the other. The policy of France is at this time as hostile to the United States

[1] Joel Barlow was appointed minister to France.

[2] Erving arrived at L'Orient, April 17.

as it ever was, since our existence as a nation. We hear, and I most sincerely hope truly, that the non-importation act, which was proposed in Congress before the discovery of what the French government intended by the professed revocation of the decrees of Berlin and Milan, did not eventually pass. It was a trap to catch us into a war with England; a war which England most richly deserves, but which would on our part be more than ever impolitic at this time.

Mr. Pinkney has taken leave at the English court, and by this time I suppose is far advanced upon his passage home. The British ministers however say, that the negotiations are not yet at an end, but that they have sent out new propositions by Mr. Foster, who goes as Minister Plenipotentiary.[1] I have no hopes that these propositions will be acceptable or admissible, but I hope Foster will behave himself better than Jackson, that he will spare his country's partisans in Congress and the Massachusetts legislature the degradation of proclaiming themselves the satellites of his insolence, and that he will not undertake to instruct the Ancient and Honorable Artillery Company of Boston, at a public dinner where he is their guest, against whom they are to draw their swords, meaning particularly, as he and they know, against their own government.

. . . . . .

## TO THOMAS BOYLSTON ADAMS

St. Petersburg, 1/13 May, 1811.

There was one of the small English poets, I think it was Dodsley, who on the reformation of the calendar in England published a poem upon the tears of old May day. As this

[1] Augustus John Foster (1780–1848).

is the only country in Europe where old May day is held in honor, it would not be expected that here, too, is precisely the spot where she sheds the most tears. If she sheds none upon the present visit which she is making us, it will be because they freeze upon her face into snow. At least she advances veiled in no shower of shadowing roses. Winter verily lingers in her lap, and I think I shall excuse myself from attendance at the celebration of her festival in the procession of carriages this afternoon, remembering that in reward for having joined in this act of devotion to her ladyship last year, she gave me one of the severest colds that I have suffered in Russia. The procession of carriages takes place from six to nine o'clock in the evening, just without the city gate, and to a village called Catherineshoff about two miles distant from it. The Emperor and all the Imperial family usually appear in it, and all the splendid equipages and liveries of the court and city exhibit themselves in their proudest magnificence.

Although the day wears so unpromising an aspect, the season has hitherto been uncommonly fine, and is at least three weeks farther advanced than it was at the same time last year. There are clearly symptoms of vegetation upon the fields and upon the trees. It so happens, however, that I feel here more interested in the influence of spring upon the waters, than in her generative progress upon the land. Whether the bud shows its lip or the blossom opens its petals a month sooner or late engages little of my concern. But when the governor of the fortress upon the island opposite the imperial palace shall cross the river in the first boat, to receive from his Majesty's hand a hundred ducats for a glass of Neva water; when the benumbed and torpid members of the river god shall recover warmth and energy enough to pour from his urn the floating crystals of the

Ladoga; when Mr. Sparrow, the consular agent at Cronstadt shall in his official bulletin announce that "between here (Cronstadt) and St. Petersburg likewise, as far as the eye can see to the westward, the water is entirely clear of ice" (which notice he sent only three days ago); when lastly, his register of emigrating ice shall be changed for a daily list of vessels arrived and sailed, these are all progressive stages towards the summer solstice, which, if I was a poet, I should be more strongly tempted to sing, than the returning verdure and harmony of the groves, or the reviving genial raptures of the flocks and herds.

And yet when the arrivals come, how often do we find ourselves disappointed in the expectation of letters from our friends. In my last I told you I thought it impossible but that some of you must have written by the *Washington*, Captain Brown. He is not yet here, but he has sent me a letter of about five lines from Lieut. Governor Gray, and I conclude that if he had any other letters he would have sent them at the same time. We must be patient again, and transfer our hopes to the next vessel.

I wrote you in the letter of which a press copy is inclosed, that a war between Russia and France was highly probable, and that it was on the point of breaking out. Since then, however, various incidents have occurred which make it still more improbable that the peace will be some time longer preserved. The serious objects of controversy all remain as unsettled as they were then, but France has yielded upon certain points of form, and has discovered certain procedures, which threatened immediate rupture. Mons. de Champagny has been very suddenly and unexpectedly removed from the office of Minister of Foreign Affairs, and Mr. Maret, Duke of Bassano, appointed in his place. That the war will blaze out yet before the end of the summer is

not improbable, but there is now a likelihood that this event will be further postponed.

Count Lauriston, a native of Pondicherri and a lineal descendant from the famous John Law, the prince of paper financiers, arrived here last week, and has presented his credentials as ambassador extraordinary from France, superseding the Duke de Vicence, who has resided here between three and four years in the same capacity, and who has rendered himself so generally agreeable here that his successor will find it difficult to replace him.

In the total dearth of direct intelligence from the United States I am obliged to take such as I find in the Hamburg *Correspondent*, which is extracted usually from the Paris *Moniteur*, where it is introduced by translation from the English newspaper. In passing through all these vehicles it often gets disfigured, besides the risk of falsehood in the original importation from America. It is about three months since we were told through this channel that Judge Livingston was immediately coming out as minister to France, and now the appointment of Mr. Barlow to that office comes through the same source. Neither of these gentlemen had arrived at Paris on the 4th of April, the date of my last advices from Mr. Russell. Mr. Erving continues also to be expected at Copenhagen, where I think his presence at this time would be useful. By the same circuitous route I now learn that Congress before they rose did pass an act supplementary to the non-intercourse, prohibiting all importations from the British dominions subsequent to the second day of February. You will see by my last letter that I expect no benefit from this measure, and that I shall regret that it actually passed. It is not for me to blame the measures of the legislature under which I serve, and at this distance I cannot be qualified to judge with a full knowledge of their mo-

tives upon that propriety. I wish the new non-importation may be productive of good, and that it may be more successful than the preceding measures of a similar nature. Spain and Portugal will still need the advantage of a free trade with us, which may withhold the hand of England from proceeding to extremities. To the policy of *neutrality* we have more than ever reason to adhere. The only object for which we could engage in a war would be commerce, and from the moment war would take place our commerce would be annihilated. Once involved in the contest it is impossible to foresee how long it would continue, or where it would leave us. In Europe the prospect of peace is more remote than war. England adheres more and more obstinately to her orders in council, which France counteracts by her decrees and her encroachments upon the continent of Europe. Portugal has a third time been rescued from subjugation. Spain is neither subdued nor liberated. France is preparing for new wars and new conquests, which England cannot prevent. Commerce is everywhere in the deepest distress, and not a symptom on either side denotes a disposition to relax from the oppressive and ruinous measures under which it groans. The war is, therefore, yet likely to be long. So say the ministers of the French Emperor, so says Mr. Perceval, in Parliament, and so proclaims every act of both the governments. Should we join in the conflict, we could scarcely hope for a better fate than to be sacrificed as one of the victims at its close.

I was under apprehensions at the date of my last letter of being dispossessed of the dwelling house where we have resided nearly a year, and of which I have a lease for another year by a sale of the house itself to the Emperor. It is now said, however, that another house has been found more suitable to the purpose for which this was wanted, and that

I shall have another chance for the full privilege of my lease. I have, therefore, abandoned the intention of taking a house for the summer in the country, though a summer country seat is as fashionable as it is desirable everywhere.

I received a few days since from my son George a letter dated 24 September last, the same day with the most recent letter that I have from you. George's however did not come with yours. It was sent under cover to Mr. Preble at Paris, and there underwent the learned and profound examination of the police to ascertain what secrets of state it might disclose. I have already answered it, and hope George will prove as punctual a correspondent as his father. He tells me, as you do, that he is afraid of losing his French, to which I could only reply, as I did to you, and as I now repeat, that I rely both upon you and upon him that he will not. His letter is partly written with his own hand, which I was rejoiced to see, though the progress of his improvement in writing is not so rapid as I could wish. This at least it is obvious he is learning *invita natura*. So much the more necessary will it be to conquer her obstacles by assiduity.

I have written to Mr. Copley in London requesting him to deliver the portrait of my father to the order of Mr. Boylston; but I suppose it will be necessary to send him at the same time a supplementary order from my father, directing Mr. Copley to comply with my request, as he will have from me only my assurance that the picture was given to me. But if this non-intercourse or non-importation has been renewed, I suppose it will oblige us to wait again two or three years before the order can be executed. As it is the only full length portrait of the original good for anything that ever was taken, I am most anxious that it may be safely transported and deposited in the Hall where I have consented that it should be placed. I never think of this subject

without feeling against Stuart an indignation, which I wish I could change into contempt. If there was another portrait painter in America, I could forgive him. I beg you to try to get the portrait he has of my mother, and to buy of him that of my father for me. If he will finish it, I will gladly give him his full price for pictures of that sort for it. Perhaps you may tempt him by this offer, taking care to withhold the payment until the work is finished.[1]

We are all so well that the ladies intend going this afternoon to the May day parade. Whether May or January, I am always with equal warmth of affection yours.

[1] "I will write from this place to Mr. Copley in London requesting him to deliver the portrait to the order of Mr. Boylston; so that whenever the non-intercourse shall again cease, he may have it by writing for it. But you must also procure from your father an order upon Mr. Copley to deliver it to my disposal, which I think he did once give me, but which I had not then the means of transmitting, and which I have not now at hand. This reminds me of the two portraits, of my father and mother, which that, I know not what to call him, Stuart has so shamefully kept, and which I wish you could get once more out of his hands, as you once rescued them from the sheriff at Philadelphia. Among some of my papers which I left with you, is the receipt for painting that of my mother, but I know not whether you can find it. If you can, I recommend to you to bring an action against Stuart, and make the sheriff take it from him again." *To Thomas Boylston Adams*, March 29, 1811. Ms.

Copley painted this portrait in London, in 1783. "It is I believe the only full length picture of my father as large as life that ever has been painted, and perhaps the only one that will remain after him. Mr. Stuart was engaged by the legislature of Massachusetts to paint one to be placed in the hall of the House of Representatives, and in pursuance of this engagement he actually took a likeness of his face. But Mr. Stuart thinks it the prerogative of genius to disdain the performance of his engagements, and he did disdain the performance of that. There is in America no other painter capable of executing a work, which I should wish to see preserved, and considering my father's age, it is more than probable that hereafter your portrait of him will be an *unique*. You will easily judge therefore how anxious I am for its preservation." *To John Singleton Copley*, April 29, 1811. Ms.

## TO THE SECRETARY OF STATE

No. 48. [JAMES MONROE]

ST. PETERSBURG, 6 May, 1811.

SIR:

On the 3rd instant I received several packets under the seal and superscription of your Department containing a set of the *National Intelligencer* from 8 December, 1809, to 2 March, 1810, and sundry public documents printed during the second session of the Eleventh Congress. These are the remainder of the despatches mentioned in my letters Nos. 41 and 42 as having been received by Mr. Forbes of Hamburg, and which he forwarded by private hands to Riga, whence they now came. It was fortunate that directions had been given not to put them into any post office in Europe: directions which it is adviseable always to give for packets exceeding the weight of two or three sheets of letter paper, and for all letters which may be desired to reach their destination unopened.

The apprehension of immediate hostilities between France and Russia, which at the date of my last letter was at its greatest height, has since then considerably subsided. Besides the expectations which the known preparations for war on both sides had excited, all the private advices from Germany and from Paris concurred in representing the determination in that "*Capital of the World*" as irrevocable, and the impatience for action so great that the month of May could not pass without bringing the parties to issue. *In the approximation of these two great powers toward that conflict which every reflecting man knows that nothing less than a supernatural interposition can prevent, the opinion of all those*

*who are not in the most intimate confidence of one or the other of the two governments has constantly outstripped the reality.*[1] I need not recapitulate the causes of the present misunderstandings between them, because they have been enumerated in many of my former letters. The immediate preparations for a war began last summer on the part of France, by a new organization and great reinforcement of troops under the superintendence of Prince Joseph Poniatowsky[2] in the Duchy of Warsaw. Russia soon followed the example, and after beginning by a very considerable increase of fortifications upon the river Dwina, and along the whole Polish frontier, has been marching troops and sending artillery thither, until, from authority which I cannot doubt, I am assured there is between Riga and Kiew a force of three hundred thousand men. All these preparations, however, on the part of Russia have been essentially defensive; and until very lately I know that it has been the determination of the Emperor Alexander not to strike the first blow. He was indeed much exasperated by the decree, which in annexing the Hanseatic cities to the French empire, despoiled the Duke of Oldenburg of all his possessions. The restoration of this Prince's territories had been expressly stipulated by France in the 12th article of the treaty of Tilsit, and in the 25th article of the same treaty there was a mutual guaranty of the integrity of the possessions of the two empires, and of all the princes included in the treaty. *The annexation of the Duke's dominions to France was therefore a direct and undisguised violation of the peace of Tilsit, and as such has undoubtedly been the subject of strong remonstrances on the part of Russia. That these remonstrances have produced and will produce no effect is well known or easily foreseen, and it is confidently said, and highly probable, that they have been*

[1] Cypher. [2] Joseph-Antoine Poniatowski (1762–1813).

*treated with little respect not to say with pointed contempt at Paris. In this state of things there has certainly been about the person of the Emperor Alexander a certain influence urging him to commence the war. Their suggestions to him have been that the war is resolved in the heart of Napoleon, that it cannot be avoided, that he is not so fully prepared as Russia, that time must be taken by the forelock; that by beginning now, Russia might insure the advantage of the first campaign, which success would secure to her the coöperation of Austria for the second; that the favorable moment must be seized for making sure of an advantageous peace with England; that if time is given to France to summon all her auxiliaries of the Rhenish Confederation, strengthened by those of Denmark and Prussia, which cannot chuse but be arranged under the same banners, Russia will find her own territories assailed at unawares by an overwhelming power, and a single campaign may wrest from her all the shores of the Baltic and all the conquests of Peter and his successors; that now the plan of campaign to begin with is easy, and its success almost certain; the Duchy of Warsaw must be first occupied and Dantzig besieged, and all the interval of Prussian provinces between this line and Magdeburg converted into a desert. This would give Russia an inexpugnable barrier, which she need not step over herself, and within which she might bid defiance to the enemy. The offer of money from a certain quarter mentioned in my cyphered letter of the 19th April, was made at this crisis, and for some days it became doubtful whether the counsels which were spurring him to immediate hostility.* [Here there appears to be an omission in the cyphers.] *I have reason to believe that he has resisted the impetuous impulse of his martial advisers, has adhered to the political system of the Chancellor, and has explicitly declared his determination not to be the aggressor. I am further told (but of this information I speak with less confidence) that*

*he has declined overtures of negotiation from England as incompatible with engagements which he means to fulfil with inflexible fidelity.*[1]

One of the circumstances which contributes to accredit the rumors of immediate rupture was the delay of the departure of the new French Ambassador appointed to supersede the Duke de Vicence. The English gazettes had announced that this new ambassador never would come, and as the time which the French embassy here had given out when he intended to leave Paris was several times postponed from week to week, it began seriously to be believed that he would not come at all. He did, however, begin his journey from Paris on the 5th of April, and has already been heard of as having passed through Frankfort, Dresden, Berlin, and Dantzig. His arrival is expected here this day or tomorrow, and it is probable we shall very soon know what turn the negotiations will take under his direction. Since his departure from Paris an event has occurred there, which may likewise contribute to a political change of system. Mr. Champagny, the Duke de Cadore, is removed from the Department of Foreign Affairs, it is said in disgrace, and Mr. Maret, Duke de Bassano,[2] hitherto Minister Secretary of State has been appointed in his stead. The cause of Mr. Champagny's misfortune I have not learned, nor whether the change will tend to defer or to hasten the explosion with Russia. There was in the *Journal de L'Empire* of April 12, a very extraordinary and insulting article, alluding to the recent mission of Count Chernicheff, who had arrived two days before at Paris.[3] I enclose you a translation of it in the

[1] Cypher.

[2] Hugues-Bernard Maret (1763-1839). See Henry Adams, *History*, V. 401.

[3] The article was entitled *Les Nouvellistes*. See Vandal, *Napoléon et Alexandre I*, III. 135.

extracts from the gazettes. To understand its true character it must be remembered that Chernicheff has been a confidential officer of the Emperor Alexander, who during the war of 1809 attended the person of the Emperor Napoleon through the whole campaign as one of his family, living constantly at his table and sleeping in his tent. Since the peace he has been repeatedly the messenger of personal communications between the two sovereigns, and on this last mission his message was undoubtedly of deep import to the destiny of two empires and of five or six kingdoms. How an article affecting to shed so much ridicule upon the person and his errand could get into an official gazette, in a country where the press is under more complete control than in any other, can be explained only by persons who are upon the spot. The Ambassador here says that the *censor* who permitted this article to appear has been imprisoned, and that Count Chernicheff has been received and treated by the Emperor Napoleon with very peculiar distinction. I am with great respect etc.

## TO THE SECRETARY OF STATE

No. 49. [JAMES MONROE]

ST. PETERSBURG, 12 May, 1811.

SIR:

A courier from the Russian Ambassador at Paris who arrived here in the course of the last week brought me a letter from Mr. Russell, enclosing a *section* from an English paper, the *Times* of 18 February. It contained your correspondence with General Turreau on the subject of the certificates of origin, only one letter of which I had before seen,

and that also, as I have heretofore mentioned, in an English newspaper. The true state of this matter is now sufficiently clear, but I regret that I have not yet received the documents in such a shape that I can make an official communication of them to the Russian government. There is indeed now no American vessel in any port of Russia liable to confiscation for having produced such a paper, but I should be glad to give Baron Campenhausen notice with all suitable official solemnity, that the government of the United States did, as he often intimated to me that they should, notice publicly this *argued falsehood* of the French consular certificates.

If the transactions of the Duke de Cadore, in his office of exterior relations were all of a stamp with his proceedings throughout this business and with his dealings in regard to General Armstrong, there may be less reason than ever to be surprised at his uneasiness on the receipt of "*peevish notes*," which he could not misrepresent to his master, or at the manner in which he is said to have gone at last out of the ministry. It was a "testy note" sent to him by the Russian Ambassador, protesting against the violation of the treaty of Tilsit, in the invasion of the Duchy of Oldenburg, which he refused to receive, and sent back to Prince Kurakin, alleging that he could not receive any representation against a measure sanctioned by a senatus consult. The same note was again sent back to Paris, by Count Chernicheff, with orders to Prince Kurakin, not only to insist upon its being received, but to complain of the refusal to receive before. And as there was a probability that the refusal to receive it would be renewed, at the same time when Chernicheff was last sent off from St. Petersburg, copies were dispatched of the same protest, and reservation of the right of the Emperor Alexander to the Duchy of Oldenburg, to the courts of

Austria and of Sweden, and to most if not all the Sovereigns of the Rhenish Confederation. Chernicheff arrived at Paris on the 10th of April. On the 12th appeared in the *Journal de L'Empire* the insulting article of which I sent you with my last letter a translation. On the 15th Chernicheff was noticed by having the honor of attending the Emperor Napoleon upon a hunting party, which it is now received and considered as a high mark of distinction; and on the 17th the Duke de Bassano took the oath as Minister of Exterior Relations, a circumstance which in the official gazette is announced without saying whether the Duke de Cadore had resigned or was removed; and indeed without making mention of his name. The note which had been refused, has now been received; and the French Ambassador here has made excuses in person to the Emperor Alexander, for the article in the *Journal de L'Empire;* an article not only offensive by its indirect allusion to himself, and to the mission of Count Chernicheff, but by the adoption from an obscene and libellous book, entitled *Secret Memoires upon Russia,*[1] of a ridiculous story concerning an officer, now a lieutenant general in the Russian service, whom it holds up to derision by name.

How far these circumstances which have all occurred so nearly at the same time have been connected with or dependent upon one another, I have at this distance not sufficient information to say with certainty; but taken all together, and more especially combined with the discomfiture and retreat of the French army in Portugal, and the disasters and dissensions of their generals in Spain, they have almost entirely removed the apprehensions of an *immediate* war between France and Russia which during the last fortnight of April was universally expected, and which though not

[1] *Lettres Persanes.*

partaking of that full conviction myself, I knew and wrote you to be extremely probable.

*There are many persons, however, who think that the rupture is only deferred for a few weeks until France shall have collected a force sufficient to overwhelm the three hundred thousand, which it is on all hands allowed that Russia has on the Polish frontier. This opinion is entertained and circulated by that party which has been stimulating the Emperor Alexander to seize the golden opportunity and commence war before France could be prepared. The irritations of the last month gave this party such strength and confidence that it was doubtful whether the imperial will itself would remain firm to the principles which there were such plausible reasons for accommodating to the change of circumstances. The conduct of the Austrian legation at the same crisis was remarkable. As the coolness between France and Russia has been increased the anxiety of Russia to renew her ties of intimacy with Austria has naturally been increasing with it, and Austria notwithstanding her recent family connection with France has found so little of the advantage she had anticipated deriving from it, and is still haunted by so many cruel recollections and so many fearful prospects, that her inducements have been of the most powerful nature to meet the returning friendship of Russia with a return, if not of equal assiduity, at least of reciprocal kindness. Such has been her policy in point of form; but she seems at the same time so much gratified with the situation of having her friendship so studiously courted that she is in no haste either to take a side, or reconcile the disputants with each other. Her only public manifestations hitherto have been of a determination to observe the strictest neutrality; but the conversations of her legation here have just hinted remnants of violent resentment against France and a strong probability that if the Russian arms should be successful the first campaign, Austria might then be ready to*

*throw her weight into the scale on her side. This language was used at a time when it was well known that it would be urged to the Emperor Alexander as a motive to begin and is quite as indicative of the real policy of Austria as an official declaration.*[1]

The new French Ambassador, Count Lauriston, arrived here on the 8th instant, and yesterday had a private audience of the Emperor in which he delivered his credentials. His predecessor the Duke de Vicence immediately before delivered his letters of recall. He returns immediately to France. It will probably soon be known what *tone* of negotiation will be assumed by the new ambassador. As yet I cannot undertake to assure you that there will be no war, before the end of the ensuing summer; but this much I can say with certainty, that France disavows the intention; and that unless France has the intention there will be none.

*I had a very few days since a conversation with the Duke de Vicence in which he told me that he hoped the storm would blow over, that there were no great interests at issue between the parties, and few little ones which could not be easily compromised.*[2] *His own personal wishes* [3] are known to be for the continuance of peace.

I am with much respect, etc.

[1] Cypher.

[2] Adams, *Memoirs*, May 6, 1811.

[3] Cypher.

## TO THE SECRETARY OF STATE

No. 50. [JAMES MONROE]

ST. PETERSBURG, 19 May, 1811.

SIR:

The first vessel which arrived at Cronstadt this season was an American, last from Denmark, where she had wintered. She got in the 11th instant at night, and was followed the next day by one more vessel, under Prussian colors. Since then there have been no other arrivals, and it appears that even after they passed, the Gulph has again been too full of ice for a free navigation.

Almost all the American vessels which have wintered at the ports of Reval, Baltic Port, Riga and Liebau, will be obliged to come for a market both of sale and of purchase at St. Petersburg. A few of them have disposed of their cargoes where they arrived and are about sailing on their return. There is danger that they will find it as difficult to get out of the Baltic as they did to get in. The British fleet has not yet appeared, and the Danish privateers have free scope for their operations. Several American vessels have already been taken into the ports of Denmark, and some of them again been released. One coming from the United States, and which sailed from Boston the twentieth of February, has reached Baltic Port. But another, the *Hercules*, Captain Snow, belonging to New Bedford, and coming from Charleston, South Carolina, with a cargo almost entirely of the produce of the United States, after having been taken and carried into a Danish port, and liberated by the sentence of the prize court there, has again been taken by a privateer fitted out under French colors from Dantzig and carried into

that place, where by advices from the captain to Mr. Harris, they have begun to unload her cargo.

The French and Hamburg gazettes last arrived here have brought information of the arrival of Mr. Erving at L'Orient the 16th of last month. I am in expectation of dispatches from you, which I presume must have been brought by him; but which Mr. Russell will not transmit until the opportunity of a courier from the Russian Ambassador shall occur. At Paris Erving will doubtless meet indications clear enough of the success which his mission may find at Copenhagen, and I hope the prospects may be more auspicious than they were at the date of the last letter I have from Mr. Russell.

It appears by all the accounts which we have from England the intention of the British government is to send into the Baltic a naval force still greater than that which they kept there the last summer. It is not easy to conceive what motive they can have for this armament unless it be for the protection of their commerce. The numerous confiscations in Russia and in Prussia, which their merchants and insurers suffered the last year have rendered the trade extremely perilous, if not unprofitable, and it is yet uncertain to what extent their licenses have been or will be granted during the present season. It is indeed impossible to conceive anything more profligate than this whole system of licenses. The licenses are given to vessels under any flag except the French (an exception not strictly adhered to in the practice); and they are given to protect covered British property, in countries where it cannot be introduced but by fraud and perjury. Every such license therefore is in substance a license for perjury as much as for trade. But this is not the difficulty among the London merchants. Some of them imagine they have found out that their trade is of such absolute necessity to their customers, that if they do but

stiffly refuse to carry it under any other flag than their own, it will force its way into their ports in spite of every possible prohibition. The prospect of a peace with Russia which they have been flattering themselves with the whole winter, and lately with great probability, has opened to them the hopes of being admitted again into the Russian ports under their own colors, which, if they could realize these hopes, their Government would soon take care to make the only flag that could find access to them. It was under the apparent certainty of this peace with Russia, that some of the merchants in London petitioned the Board of Trade that no more licenses might be granted, and that no importations should be allowed from the Baltic but upon condition that an equal amount of British goods should be taken in return, and they are threatening the same measure as a retaliation for the non-importation act passed in Congress.

If, as according to present appearance there is every reason to expect, they should be disappointed in their visions of peace with Russia and of a war between Russia and France, I know not how it will affect their policy towards the commerce and vessels of the United States, but they will be compelled to adhere to their trade of licenses in the Baltic. Perhaps they might renounce for a year or two the importation of all the articles which they have been accustomed to take from this country, excepting that of hemp; but the scarcity of that in England is already so great, they find it so impossible to obtain an adequate supply of it from elsewhere, and it is an article of such indispensable necessity to their navy, that they must have it, whether by an English flag, by licensed frauds, or by neutrals. They must receive and not prescribe the conditions. Their North American colonies alone preserve them from the same dependence with regard to ship timber.

The aspect of affairs between France and Russia remains much as at the date of my last letter. *The reception at Paris of the note which had at first been refused by the Duke de Cadore has quieted the alarm of an immediate explosion, but all the causes of dissension between the parties remain unadjusted and unexplained.*[1] The late French Ambassador at this court has taken leave, and departs with the most signal marks of personal regard from the Emperor Alexander which he was ever known to bestow, and his successor Count Lauriston has been received, if not with equal cordiality at least with the same courtesy. *It is however regarded as something extraordinary that with respect to the principal complaint of Russia he has no instructions.*[1] It is yet impossible to pronounce whether the issue of the discussions will be peace or war. There is hitherto no symptom of disarming on either side in Poland. *I am assured that the Russian reinforcements continue to march towards that quarter.*[1] But at all events the signal for war will not now be given *here.* If it comes from the south you must receive information of it sooner than it would be possible for me to give it. I am very respectfully, etc.

## TO THE SECRETARY OF STATE

No. 51. [JAMES MONROE]

ST. PETERSBURG, May 26th, 1811.

SIR:

In the course of the last week I have received a letter from Mr. Erving written at Paris, in which he mentions that he was the bearer of several despatches from you to me, which would be forwarded by the first courier to be sent by the

[1] Cypher.

Russian Ambassador, Prince Kurakin. He was to leave Paris in about fifteen days after the date of Mr. Erving's letter and is expected here within a week or ten days.

The arrival of this courier is expected with some anxiety, as it is foreseen that the character of the dispatches with which he will be charged may put an end to the equivocal state of the political relations between France and Russia, which still subsists. The last accounts which we have from England represent those between the United States and Great Britain as extremely critical, and the prospect of war as more imminent than it ever has been before. The ministerial papers announce without qualification that orders have been issued to their naval officers to take all American vessels, bound to France, and they intimate that the same instructions have been dispatched by the frigate *Actaeon* to the East Indies, and by other vessels sent by express to Halifax and to the West India station. They have not yet proclaimed the same measure with reference to the Baltic navigation, but they only hint that some very important purpose is intended by the unexampled armament coming out under the command of Admiral Saumarez, who sailed from England about the 20 April and is said to have appeared already before Gothenburg. At the same time it is said that Mr. Foster has sailed to the United States with proposals, which Mr. Perceval in the House of Commons declared to be of a conciliatory nature towards the United States.

*At the point of extremity towards which our negotiations with Great Britain have been so long verging, and which appears to be so near at hand, it cannot be a matter of indifference to the President to be accurately informed of the real state of the relations between Russia and her ally (if the term may be used) on the one part, and their common enemy on the other. Impressed with the importance to our country that a just and somewhat*

*circumstantial view of the present and prospective policy of Russia may be taken by the American government, at the moment when the final election must be made, of adherence to that neutrality so long and so earnestly maintained, or of becoming parties to a war so formidable in its aspect, so ardently deprecated, but from which the spirit of the nation may have no honorable and practicable retreat,*[1] I have been and still am to the highest degree sensible of the duty devolving upon me to obtain the most correct and particular information of the real state of things here, and to communicate it to you as early and as speedily, as the great distance and the numerous difficulties and obstructions, both natural and occasional, to the intercourse will admit. But correct information is not always attainable, and the fabrication of false *secret news* is as flourishing as that of false papers is under the license system in London. It is sometimes more difficult to detect the political forgeries of the newsmongers than the commercial forgeries of the British traders, and in the very eagerness of zeal to give you all the important changes in the political atmosphere of this country, I sometimes unavoidably transmit to you accounts of particular incidents, which ultimately prove to have belonged to the spurious breed. This observation, I flatter myself, will apply only to facts of no extraordinary moment, and even with regard to them, it is always my intention, in writing to you, to discriminate between those, upon which undoubting reliance may be placed, and those, the authenticity of which is questionable. Of the latter class is the paper of which I now enclose you a translation. It is secretly circulated here as a speech made by the Emperor Napoleon to his Council of Commerce on the 6 April last. The day is a mistake, for on the 6 April there was no Council of Commerce held. But there was on

[1] Cypher.

the 25 March and on the 8 April. *And in one of those days, or shortly before, the Emperor Napoleon did make, or at least is believed by the Russian government to have made, a speech indicating a determination of war with Russia, unless Russia should completely and actually carry into execution measures against English commerce corresponding with his own.*

*In my last letter I assured you that at all events the signal for war would not be given here; but in that as on former occasions I have suggested that there is an active and powerful English party here seizing every occasion of access to the Emperor and stimulating him* to be before hand with France. *I believe the enclosed paper was* got up *by them, and that its object is to prevail upon the Emperor Alexander to commence or conclude a negotiation of peace with England. I say, to commence or conclude, because I cannot pronounce with certainty whether such a negotiation between Russia and England is or is not on foot. In my cyphered letter of 19 of April I spoke of it as probable. It was an inference which I drew from certain facts, but of which I had no sure advice. I have since written you that I was told overtures from England had been declined by the Emperor Alexander; but although I had this from a person likely to know, and on whose veracity I placed perfect reliance, I could* [not] *venture to give it you as certain. Since then additional circumstances have occurred to warrant the belief that a separate negotiation with England is en train, and that it is carrying* on at London; *but if such be the fact, it is neither through the medium, nor with the knowledge of the Chancellor, Count Romanzoff, though he is still the Minister of Foreign Affairs.*

*There is yet no change in the outward manifestation of amity towards France at this court. The new French Ambassador continues to be treated with distinction by the Emperor, but the reënforcements of troops are still marching to the frontiers of Poland. Count Lauriston is still* without instructions *rel-*

*ative to the occupation of the Duchy of Oldenburg, and Russia was never less disposed than at this juncture to shut up her ports against commerce.*[1] It is rumored that the Emperor Alexander himself proposes to go and review his forces at the frontiers, and the probability is suggested of a new interview between him and the Emperor Napoleon.

*The peculiarly menacing and hostile attitude which the English government have assumed towards the United States is one of the circumstances which indicate their confidence of an approaching accommodation of their affairs with Russia. If they expected that the Russian markets would be rigorously shut against them, they would not likely deprive themselves of North America, especially when they depend so essentially upon one or the other of those markets for such articles as bread and naval stores.*[1]

Since I wrote you last week I have learnt the capture of three more American vessels by a French privateer from Dantzig—the *Atlantic*, Jayne, from New York, the *Catherine*, Oakington, from Boston, and the *Julia Ann*, from Philadelphia. Their papers are sent to Paris where their fate must be decided. [*One line and a half of cypher not decyphered.*] I am with great respect, etc.

[1] Cypher.

## TO THE SECRETARY OF STATE

No. 52. [JAMES MONROE]

ST. PETERSBURG, 2 June, 1811.

SIR:

The Russian consul general in France, Mr. Labensky, arrived here on Wednesday, the 29 ultimo, as a courier from the Ambassador at Paris, and brought me the dispatches of which Mr. Erving had been the bearer from the United States. The packets of which I have to acknowledge on this occasion the receipt from your Department are the following.

1. *Your letter of the 13th February, authorizing me to concert with the Russian government a treaty of commerce, and giving me some general instructions relative to the negotiations, accompanied with a draft of the heads of a treaty to be considered as a part of these instructions.*[1]

2. Letter of 26 February, advising me of the President's having been pleased, by and with the advice and consent of the Senate, to appoint me an Associate Justice of the Supreme Court of the United States: directing me in consequence of this appointment to return to the United States as soon as the public interest and my own convenience would admit, and enclosing a letter of leave to the Emperor of Russia: a blank commission for a chargé d'affaires or a secretary of legation, to be filled in case of my return to the United States: and the commission to myself as an Associate Justice of the Supreme Court.

3. Letter of 6 March, together with copies of your letters to Mr. Russell of the same date, and to Mr. Pinkney of the day before, and the *National Intelligencer* of 5 March, con-

[1] Cypher.

taining the supplementary non-intercourse act, to which all these letters relate.

4. A cover, inclosing an open dispatch addressed to Samuel Hazard, Esq., Archangel, and containing a commission for him as consul at that post, with a letter from you informing him of his appointment.

5, 6. Two packets containing printed documents of the third session of the eleventh Congress; the laws of the three preceding sessions and a few newspapers.

7, 8, 9. Three packets, containing a file of the *National Intelligencer* from 25 June, 1810, to 29 January, 1811. The file of papers comes down to 14 February.

*I shall immediately request a conference with the Chancellor, Count Romanzoff, and communicate to him the authority which I have received respecting the negotiation of a treaty. Possibly some objection may arise with respect to the nature of my powers, but as that which I possess may suffice for every step previous to the signature and conclusion, perhaps no other will be at an earlier period required.*[1]

Deeply sensible of the honor done me by the President and Senate of the United States in the appointment to the bench of the Supreme Court, I lament, that circumstances beyond my control have prescribed to me the duty of declining it. As they are for the most part of a private nature I have taken the liberty to explain them in a letter to the President himself, herewith enclosed: and which I have to ask of you the favor to deliver to him. One of them, itself decisive to dictate my determination, is the impracticability of my return to the United States during the present year, arising from the peculiar situation of my family, the length of time necessary to accomplish a voyage from the extremity of the Gulph of Finland to the continent of North America

[1] Cypher.

and the short portion of the year during which such a voyage can be commenced. This circumstance necessarily detaining me here, will induce me to withhold the letter of leave to the Emperor, and to leave the commission for a chargé d'affaires or a secretary of legation in blank until I shall receive the further orders of the President.

The effect of the act, supplementary to that commonly called the non-intercourse, will I hope be favorable, in regard to our relations with France, as it will probably increase the inveteracy of the present British ministry against us. *On this occasion it may be proper to inform you, with the request that it may be received as in the closest secrecy, that I have recently had two* accidental *conversations with his Imperial Majesty, in which he manifested the desire to be informed, what was the precise state of our present relations with England. In the last of them, which was the day before yesterday, he told me that he had received very interesting dispatches from Count Pahlen which had given him much pleasure.*[1] *I have it from a good source that in those dispatches the Count gives it as his decided opinion that there will ultimately be no war between the United States and England, and I know from authority equally good that the Russian government earnestly wishes there may be no such war. You will of course understand that nothing of this sort has been said to me by the Emperor, or officially by any of his ministers.*[2]

Mr. Hazard is not at present in this country. He spent part of the winter in this city and in February went to Copenhagen. His intention was, however, to return here in the Spring, but I have not heard directly from him since the first week in March. I have heard that he went from Copenhagen to England. I shall inform Mr. Erving that the commission is in my hands, and desire him to give Mr.

[1] Adams, *Memoirs*, May 31, 1811. [2] Cypher.

Hazard notice of it, if he is still at Copenhagen. You will have learnt directly from Mr. Harris, that previous to his receiving knowledge of this appointment, he had given that of Vice Consul at Archangel to Mr. Francis Dana, Jr., who had been recognized in that capacity by the Russian government. He will discharge the duties of the office until Mr. Hazard shall repair to the post, and if that gentleman should not return to this country at all, I would recommend that Mr. Dana may receive the appointment in his place. From what I saw of Mr. Hazard, while he was here, I consider him as a discreet and intelligent young man, well qualified for the office, as I believe Mr. Dana to be also.

The documents, laws and newspapers, sent me by Mr. Erving, I have not yet had time to peruse with the attention due to them. Should the inspection of them suggest to me any step as proper to be taken by me, or any idea, which it may be useful to communicate to you, it will be mentioned in my future letters.

I enclose to you a translation of the note which the Duke de Cadore refused to receive from the Russian Ambassador, and which has so frequently been mentioned in my late despatches. I have heretofore informed you, that at the same time, when Count Chernicheff was last sent to Paris, copies of this note were dispatched to be presented to all the courts on the European Continent in amity with Russia even including that of Westphalia. The substance of the note was known, but the note itself was kept secret from the French Ambassador here, and from all the other foreign ministers, until it returned to them from their courts. *The one from which the within translation was made has come indirectly to me, and you will probably have received before this reaches you the same document from elsewhere.*[1]

[1] Cypher.

The Imperial Council are engaged in secret deliberations upon a new plan of ministerial organization, or rather upon what is said to be the restoration of a system originally formed by Peter the Great. It is said there will be a new Minister of Foreign Affairs, but the Chancellor will be elevated to a general superintendence over all the ministerial departments. The little that transpires of this affair is yet so confused and the reports concerning it are so various, that I am unable to speak of it with more precision. I am very respectfully, etc.

## TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES

(*Private.*) [James Madison]

St. Petersburg, 3 June, 1811.

Sir:

I received on the 29th of last month, together with some other dispatches from the Secretary of State, one enclosing a commission to me as an associate justice of the Supreme Court of the United States,[1] a new letter of leave to his Majesty, the Emperor of Russia, a blank commission for a secretary of legation, or chargé d'affaires, and an instruction in consequence of this new appointment to return to the United States, as soon as the public interest and my own convenience will permit.

The new mark of confidence, which you have been pleased to show me in the nomination to an office so highly honorable, and so far as could relate to my own personal interest and concerns so acceptable, has made on my mind an im-

[1] The nomination was sent to the Senate February 21, and approved by the Senate unanimously on the next day.

pression which no time can obliterate, and which leaves me the more earnestly to regret my incapacity to meet it with a return, the most agreeable to you, by assuming and discharging its duties in a manner to justify that confidence, and do honor to your appointment.

In the letters, which I had the honor of writing you on the 7th of January and 8th of February last, I intimated to you that the peculiar circumstances of my family would probably make it impracticable for me to embark with them for the United States during the present year, and in the former I informed you that under these circumstances, if you should judge that the termination of my mission here had become expedient, I should remain here as a private individual until the next summer. This obstacle to my departure remains as when those letters were written, and should my successor at this court arrive during the present season, I shall still find myself under the necessity of obtaining the Emperor's permission to reside here probably until this time next year, but at least until I can commence my homeward voyage, without exposing to extraordinary and unnecessary dangers lives which ought to be dearer to me than my own. There are contingencies which might enable me at a very late period of this season to embark, but I have little hope to reckon upon some of them, and still less inclination to anticipate the rest. My expectation is to be detained here the next winter, by ties which the affections of a husband and a parent can neither dissolve nor sever.

I cannot expect, nor however it might suit my convenience, can I permit myself to desire that you should keep an office of such importance vacant a full year longer to await my return, and this consideration is decisive to induce me to decline the appointment. It must also relieve me from the necessity of expressing to you other motives operating upon

my disposition to produce the same result, some of which are of peculiar delicacy, and for the avowal of which I must in a special manner solicit your candor and indulgence.

My education to the law was regular, and during several short periods in the course of my life, I have been in professional practice at the bar. But its studies were never among those most congenial to my temper, and the great proportion of my time has been employed in occupations so different from those of the judicial tribunals, that I have long entertained a deep and serious distrust of my qualifications for a seat on the bench. This sentiment was so strong, that it induced me soon after my return from Europe in 1801, to decline the proposal of being a candidate for a vacancy in the Supreme Court of my native State, at a time when I was in private life, and when that situation would have been altogether suitable to my own convenience. It has long been known to my most intimate friends, and would have been communicated to you, had the prospect of such a nomination ever presented itself to me, as sufficiently probable to warrant my interference to prevent it. In the present this reluctance would be much increased by a conviction, as clear to my understanding as it is impressive upon my feelings, that there is another person, a friend whom I most highly value in every respect, better qualified than myself for that particular office, and whom my warm wishes, perhaps more than the rigor of principle, have considered as having pretensions to it at least far superior to mine.

I speak of Mr. Davis, the present District Judge for Massachusetts, a man of whom an intimate acquaintance of many years entitles me to say, that he is equally estimable by the purity of his heart, the firmness of his temper and the solidity of his judgment; whose education and professional practice have been with little if any interruption devoted to the law,

and who, by an experience of ten years in his present station, has been peculiarly [qualified] for the duties of an office exactly analogous to it.

I am aware of all the considerations which may perhaps concur in giving you other views connected with this subject, and which may lead your ultimate determination to another person. Mr. Davis's political opinions, and more especially those of his social connections, may render it necessary to contemplate the possible operation of his appointment to this place upon the public sentiment. The extent and influence of this reflection it would not become me, were it even within my competence, to discuss, but you will I am persuaded permit me the recollection that Mr. Davis, on one signal and not untrying occasion, manifested at once the steadiness of his mind, his inflexible adherence to the law, his independence of party prejudices and control, and his determination to support at the post allotted to him the administration of government in all constitutional measures. I may, perhaps, estimate too highly the qualities of which in that instance he gave such decisive proof, and you may not have been made acquainted with the power of that influence to which he then proved himself inaccessible. I need not enlarge upon it, and can only apologize to you for having said so much, only as it will explain to you the motives upon which I should have such serious disinclination to occupy a place, which my heart and my reason would so perfectly concur in assigning by preference to another.

I must, therefore, intreat you, sir, to confer upon some other person the office as a judge of the Supreme Court, to which you have had the goodness to appoint me. The impossibility of my return to the United States in due time to assume its duties must of itself forbid my acceptance of it.

The other reasons which would in any case impel me to decline it I should have suppressed, but for the high sense of my personal obligation to you for the nomination, and the wish to be justified in your opinion for renouncing the post to which you have judged me suitably qualified.[1]

I shall therefore wait for your further instructions respecting my continuance at this court. It may be proper for me, however, to add that the public expectation in the United States, and that of the Emperor and his government here, being now fully prepared for my removal, and my own inclinations and those of my friends in America being equally strong to abridge as much as possible the period of absence from my country, I earnestly solicit that the motive of my personal convenience may be set aside, whenever you shall think my recall expedient on public considerations. If the condition of my family should prevent my return home, when the want of my services here has ceased, I had much rather bear the charge and inconvenience to which it might subject me, than remain an unnecessary encumbrance upon the public. I shall at all events remain here a time sufficient to receive your ultimate determination, not only upon my letters of 7 January and 8 February, but also upon this one, and I beg you to be assured that on my return to the United States, whenever you shall deem it proper, and I shall find it practicable, whether in public office of any kind or in retirement, the grateful sense of your kindness and the most

[1] "Lieut. Governor Lincoln is appointed judge of the Supreme National Judiciary in the place of Judge Cushing. The newspapers say he accepted only to keep the *place warm* for J. Q. Adams, whenever he returns. Although I know there were many who wished you might have been here to have filled it, and the late judge himself wished you to have been his successor, I think you have expressed yourself of a different opinion." *Abigail Adams to John Quincy Adams*, January 20, 1811. Ms.

fervent wishes for the prosperity of your public administration, and the promotion of your personal happiness, will be among the sentiments nearest to my heart. I am, etc.

## TO JOHN ADAMS

ST. PETERSBURG, 7 June, 1811.

MY DEAR SIR:

. . . . . .

In the midst of my dissertation upon the stoic philosophy came upon me the whole budget of dispatches and newspapers, brought by Mr. Erving as far as Paris, and by the Russian consul in France from that city. I had been thinking how congenial to my own feelings and resolutions was the following passage of your letter of 11 February: "In absolute private life, scorning all intrigue, but employing your studies for the solid interest of mankind and your country, you may do more real good in my opinion than in any public station," and had been pleasing myself that you would be gratified in finding that I had already expressed precisely the same sentiments in my letter to my brother of 10 April, when, to give me another view of the question, comes a commission as an Associate Justice of the Supreme Court of the United States, and your and my ever dear and venerated mother's letters of 4 March. When I assure you that in the whole course of my life I scarcely ever did a responsible act, of which I was proud or ashamed, without feeling my soul soothed or galled with the reflection how it would affect the sensibility of my parents, I leave it to your own imagination to judge how all my philosophy, all my love of retirement, all my opinions of my superior usefulness in private life, have been staggered by this commission and these

letters. The commission, inasmuch as it offered me an honorable station, and a pittance (a miserable one indeed) for the maintenance of my family during the remainder of my days, was all that my ambition could wish, or that my estimate of the value of money could expect. As it presented me the occasion of returning creditably to my country, to my friends, and above all to my parents and children, it brought me the most welcome of messages. But you have long known my own sense of my own unfitness for a seat in judicial tribunals. You did not, perhaps, know, but I had written to my brother, at a time when I had not a suspicion of this appointment, what particular objections I had against this office, arising from a wish long since settled in my mind that it might be occupied by another person. I will not say that there was little attraction to me in a place, which had already been declined by one man, and to which another had been nominated before me. I never did, and never will, suffer considerations of this nature to influence my determinations. But to take the seat, which from the bottom of my heart I believe due to my friend, and for which I am equally convinced that my friend is better fitted than myself, if my reluctance to this must be considered as fastidious delicacy, be it so. It is not one of the sentiments for which it will be necessary for me to apologize to you.

Yet I am deeply sensible to the personal kindness, as well as to the honor, shown me by the President in the nomination, and to the more surprising, though not more unexpected, *unanimity* of the Senate in approving it. To the popularity with which you assure me the appointment has been received, and to the wish manifested by several of my friends, and most especially by yourself and my mother, that I should avail myself of this appointment to return home, concurring with my own ardent inclinations to be once

more restored to the bosom of my country, to the pleasure and instruction of your society, to the means of superintending the education of my darling boys, and with the impulses, physical and moral, which urge me to more southern climes, and a more frugal establishment than can import with a residence in this country, they would have produced an extreme perplexity of mind and a conflict of emotions, under which either decision would have been followed by an uneasiness and dissatisfaction with myself, not very suitable for a stoic philosopher. From this dilemma the blessing of Providence (for so I fervently pray that I may ultimately have cause to consider it,) had, by a simple and very natural circumstance in the condition of my family, graciously pleased to relieve me. . . . In this state of things I cannot embark for a voyage to America. To say that no office in the Union could tempt me to expose the lives of a wife and infant to the dangers inseparable from such a passage at this time, would but weakly express my resolution upon this occasion. I am not aware of any duty, which can counterbalance that which commands me to await the result of this dispensation of Heaven here. In January last I had received permission to return home, and had some expectation of being superseded here. I then informed the President that under these circumstances, if my mission here should be terminated, I should remain here as a private individual until the next summer. Such was, and such still remains, my determination. It rests upon a foundation not lightly laid, and which not even this new and extraordinary incident has been able to shake.

The idea did for a moment suggest itself to my consideration of stating the facts anew to the President, and leaving it at his discretion to fill the place by a new appointment, or to leave it vacant until the next summer, when I have every

reason to hope I shall find it practicable to go home. But my spirit could not brook the thought of asking, or even permitting, that an office thus important should be kept vacant, merely to suit my private convenience, and besides the dictates of my own principles, I had before me your example when appointed Chief Justice of Massachusetts. I remembered that you had declined the acceptance of that office, to prevent it from remaining too long unfilled by the necessity of your attendance upon other duties. As a direction for my conduct upon every occurrence involving public principle, I know of no human law more unerring than your example.

I have, therefore, explicitly declined the acceptance of this appointment, and in a letter to the President of the United States have alleged, with as much delicacy as the subject would admit, the motives of my determination. It has been painful to me to be brought to this test of my principles, and I regret exceedingly that a fourth nomination should have become necessary for an office to which, if my sincerest wishes could have availed, there would have been only one. With regard to my own conduct, as I had not a moment of hesitation upon its propriety, I am not apprehensive that I shall ever look back with dissatisfaction upon the course I have taken. But I would gladly be justified for it in the opinion of the President, to whom I am indebted for the nomination, and above all in yours and in that of my dear mother. There is neither office, dignity, honor nor emolument, in the gift of man, single or collective, upon this spot of earth, which could for a moment counterbalance the anguish that I should feel in giving by any voluntary act of mine a serious pang to you. I feel, however, a cheerful confidence that after fully weighing the difficulties of my situation, you will approve the grounds upon which I have

rested. I am sorry, very sorry, to disappoint the expectations of my country, by withholding myself from that judgment seat where their partiality would have placed me, but how much happier for me and for them is it, than it would be to disappoint their expectations upon the seat itself. . . .

## TO THE SECRETARY OF STATE

No. 53. [JAMES MONROE]

ST. PETERSBURG, 9 June, 1811.

SIR:

*I had last Tuesday the 4th instant an interview with the Chancellor Count Romanzoff, in which I mentioned to him that from ideas which since long residence here I had formed of the importance and mutual benefit of the commercial relations between the United States and Russia,*[1] from the signal manner in which Russia had distinguished herself above all the other belligerent powers of Europe in her treatment of the fair commerce and neutral rights of America, *and from a wish to increase and render still more advantageous the commerce between the two countries, the idea and desire had occurred to me of cementing still further their amity by a treaty of commerce. I had suggested to the government of the United States and was now authorized to propose the negotiation of such a treaty, if it should be* [*agreeable*] *to the government of His Imperial Majesty. I had thought it most proper to make to him, the Count, at first this verbal communication instead of sending him an official note upon the subject. I requested him to consider it as confidential, so that it should at least be made known only where he*

[1] Cypher. See also Adams, *Memoirs*, June 4, 1811.

*thought it advisable, as I had communicated the knowledge of it to no person whomsoever. The Count answered me by asserting his great and long settled attachment to the United States, the desire which he had so many years entertained of favoring the American commerce. It was not only a thing to which he was attached as sentiment but it had been with him long a maxim of policy. It was the interest of Russia to encourage and strengthen and multiply the commercial powers which might be rivals of England to form a balance to her overbearing power. Russia herself had not the advantages for it, she could not be a great naval or maritime power, Nature had in a great measure denied her the means, she ought then to support and favor those who had them. The propriety of extending this spirit to the United States had become more obvious and strong by the decay and disappearance of the old commercial states. Holland for instance, how great a commercial power she had been even within our memory. She was now swallowed up. These sentiments he had often expressed with a strong sense of conviction to the Emperor, who had always received them well and appeared impressed with the justice of them. He referred me to Mr. Harris for the proof that such had always been his system, or indeed to any other person acquainted with the opinions that he had constantly avowed. I observed that I was fully sensible of it myself, had often had the most satisfactory evidence of it, and that my government were by no means ignorant of it. He said that he would place before the Emperor the two propositions which he presumed would meet with no difficulty whatsoever, unless indeed there should be one which he did foresee. It was, that in the violent and convulsed state of commerce and of the world at this time he hardly conceived it possible to agree upon anything that, if he might be allowed the expression, had common sense in it. At any rate, however, this need not prevent him and me from debating the subjects which might be inter-*

*esting to the commerce of our countries, and coming to an agreement if we could. He would make his report of this conversation to the Emperor in a few days and would send and ask me to call upon him again.*[1]

I have informed you in several of my preceding letters, that the convention which had been arranged between Count Romanzoff and the Portuguese chargé d'affaires had not been definitely signed, but remained to be settled on the arrival of the new minister from the Prince Regent of Portugal, who is still expected. The changes which since the opening of the Spring have occurred in *Portugal*, as well as in the prospects, if not in the existing relations, between France and Russia, have no doubt very materially affected the views of both parties with respect to modifications in their treaty of commerce. The total evacuation of Portugal by the French armies, and the prospect of their evacuating Spain at least as far north as the Ebro, have raised the probability that the house of Braganza may be restored to their European dominions, and that the ancient regulations of trade in their treaty with Russia may again become more conformable to their system of policy than the new ones lately proposed to be substituted for them. *The commercial arrangements between the United States and Russia cannot be so much affected by the change of complexion in the political state of Portugal, but they must be very materially influenced by great changes in the policy of Russia, whether in relation to France or to Britain, and not a little by the changes in character in the relative situation of the United States and of Britain to each other. The idea suggested by the Chancellor, that there would in these times be a difficulty in agreeing upon anything rational which could form the materials of a commercial treaty, is itself very natural, and may perhaps have contributed to delay*

[1] Cypher.

*the transmission to me of the full power which I had requested. From this circumstance and from the observations of the Count I am led to the belief that his views and those of the President with regard to the subject of concluding a treaty for the present are identically the same: that it may be well to compare ideas and mutually communicate projects for consideration, but to wait for more settled times and a clearer political sky to sign and ratify.*

*I have not heard anything more from the Count since this conference. Two days after it* [1] the Emperor met with an unfortunate accident, which has confined him to his chamber until this day, and will probably confine him for some days longer. His horse fell under him, and in the fall he had one of his fingers dislocated and received severe contusions on the face and on one knee. His attendance at the Council of the Empire will probably be suspended for some days by this event, during which the plan for a new ministerial organization mentioned in my last letter will also remain in suspense. I have heard something more of this plan, but not enough to give you precise information of its purport. One of its effects may be, as I have before suggested, to raise Count Romanzoff in rank and dignity, but to remove him from the Department of Foreign Affairs. This last event has been long preparing, and for some time has perhaps been as much desired by himself as by his adversaries and rivals. The points of dissension between Russia and France remain unadjusted. The speech of the Emperor Napoleon to his Council of Commerce and Manufactures on the 24th of March undoubtedly did threaten a war with Russia unless she should adopt his measures against English trade. There are in manuscript and even in print various different accounts of this speech, one of which I sent you with a former number. As the speech

[1] Cypher.

was not written it was reported memoriter by different hearers, and by secret circulation in manuscript has doubtless gathered many various readings and commentaries; but of the substantial foundation there is no question. A much milder tone, however, has since been assumed, and I learn that the last dispatches from Prince Kurakin report many fair words and fair promises. The prospect of a war this summer loses daily of its probability, but there is ample time for it yet to come within the six months from the 24th of March. *In the event of a war Count Romanzoff would certainly not retain the Department of Foreign Affairs, and as there is no expectation that this catastrophe will eventually or even long be deferred, the Count is perhaps as willing to ascend from that Department to something high as his enemies would be to humiliate him from it downward.*[1]

I learn that the *Experiment*, Captain Vibberts, arrived yesterday at Cronstadt with dispatches for me from your Department, which I am in hourly expectation of receiving. In the meantime I remain, very respectfully, etc.

## TO THE SECRETARY OF STATE

No. 54. [JAMES MONROE]

ST. PETERSBURG, 15 June, 1811.

SIR:

. . . . . .

In my conference with Count Romanzoff on the 4th inst. since which I have not again heard from him, I informed him that I had received a new letter of leave for his Imperial Majesty, and the President and Senate of the United States

[1] Cypher.

had been pleased to honor me by an appointment to a distinguished office in my own country; but that as circumstances of a private nature made it impossible for me to return to the United States at present, and would probably continue to prevent me from embarking the present year; and as the office was of a nature which required that it should be filled as soon as possible, I had found myself under the necessity of declining it, and with respect to the mission here should wait for further orders of the President. I further observed that I was instructed to state the motives to my recall to be such as did not in the slightest degree impair the friendly sentiments of the President towards this government, and to add that in case of my return to the United States, it was his intention to appoint without any unnecessary delay a person to succeed me here.

With regard to my own departure the Count answered me with his usual civility; but he appeared to receive with peculiar satisfaction the assurance that in the event of my return another minister would be appointed in my stead. He said that he was sure it would give the Emperor pleasure, as it was entirely conformable to the friendly sentiments which he expected on the part of the United States. I have more than once had occasion to remark the solicitude of Count Romanzoff, and of the Emperor himself on this subject. As it existed long before the establishment of the reciprocal missions now established, it is well known to the President. The point of view in which the United States stand in the political system of Russia, according to the principles of Count Romanzoff, which in this respect are certainly those of the Emperor, he has very often and explicitly avowed to me, and has reiterated in this conversation as you will perceive by my last letter. And this alone might account for the disposition so steadily and earnestly

manifested for a permanent diplomatic intercourse between the two governments. When in the month of January last I received permission to return to the United States, it was impossible to counteract entirely the impression which the Emperor seems to have received, that the American government proposed to keep here in future only a chargé d'affaires. It was probably from that idea that a commission was sent to Count Pahlen for the court of Brazil, with an optional power to go there or to remain in the United States, as he should judge proper, and without positively terminating his mission with you. I presume that a Russian minister will be kept in the United States as long as an American minister is kept here, and although Count Pahlen's answer to the proposition made to him of going to Brazil cannot yet have been received, I have already heard intimations that he probably will not go, and the report has even been circulated that he has declined the appointment.

The Count enquired with some earnestness what was the state of our affairs with England. I told him that it would depend altogether upon England herself. That my letters from America did not appear to indicate an expectation of war there, but that the late accounts from England seemed to manifest hostile dispositions. *He said he thought that very probably England would decide according to the ministerial opinion of what was most for her own interest, and that would now, more than ever, be the adherence to their system. Their recent successes give great strength to the ministry and repress the opposition far more than had been seen for many years in that country. He must say that for many years England had not exhibited such talents as those by which she was now governed. The two brothers Wellesley had certainly proved themselves extraordinary men, not only by the greatness of their plan, which they had pursued, and their perseverance in carry-*

*ing it through, but as to the success with which it was likely to be attended. The catastrophe (dénouement) in Spain and Portugal was apparently not distant, and it promised a great result. If, to be sure, it was only to begin over again, they would not appear to have done so much; but if the issue should be so important as now appeared probable, it would certainly be much to their credit. They will also be much elated by their successes, and he did not consider them as men who would be restrained by principle from any enterprise that they might judge to be expedient. I told him I did not rely at all upon the expectation that principle would restrain them if Spain and Portugal should be entirely evacuated by the French. The people there would, as much as ever, want supplies of grain and provisions, and the English could hardly resolve to intercept them, as they could not do it without it famishing their allies and their own armies. The Count asked whether they could not [obtain some] of the same supplies from other quarters, [and procure] part of their supplies from thence; but [I replied] it did not suffice, and if they lost the American market there was none that could take its place unless it were that of the Baltic from Dantzig to Riga, and that I believed had been to a certain extent always open to them.*[1] *He said that supplies from thence had been small indeed; at least there had scarcely been any exportation from thence. That, I replied, was at least their only resource, and if they opened that, it could only be by coming to terms of accommodation with Russia; and if they made peace with Russia, in the name of heaven what motive could they have for quarrelling with America? The Count smiled, and said, that it reminded him of something that had been said by another person, and which, therefore, he could not give as his own. It was, that there were sea mad-men as well as land mad-men (des enragés de mer comme de terre),*

[1] "There is evidently a mistake in the figures of this sentence." Note by Brent of the Department of State.

*and the English were the sea mad-men. The Count did not tell me who it was that had said this, nor who were intended by the land mad-men; but you will have no difficulty in divining my conjecture, both of the speaker and the object of the speech.*[1]

Since the day of this conversation the arrival at Cronstadt of many American vessels, some of them directly from the United States, has ascertained that as yet the British government has issued no orders to intercept the American navigation in the Baltic. They have not even blockaded the passage of the Sound or of the port of Elsineur. It is said some of their commanders have refused to American vessels the protection of their convoy, which, if they would not stop their passage, is the greatest favor we could ask of them.

The anxiety for a peace with Turkey increases here, and new efforts and SACRIFICES will be made to obtain it. The prohibition upon the exportation of grain from the ports of the Black Sea to Constantinople is already removed. This has been owing to the strong representations of the Duke de Richelieu, the governor of Odessa, who is now here. *He is very desirous that in the treaty of peace between Russia and the Porte a formal stipulation should be introduced for the admission of American vessels to navigate the Black Sea. I had the honor of writing to you on the 30th March, 1810; but as it is not noticed in any of your letters to me since that time, I do not feel myself authorized to take any official steps in the business. . . .*

[1] Cypher.

## TO GEORGE WILLIAM ERVING

St. Petersburg, 6/18 June, 1811.

Dear Sir:

. . . . . .

The retirement of Mr. Smith from the Department of State appears to be the natural issue of a certain train of incidents, which commenced with the present administration, and to which I think you allude in accounting for the unexpected support given to Mr. Barlow's nomination. I know not of anything that I have heard for many months from America which has given me so much pleasure, as the intimation that Mr. Lloyd,[1] and such men as he, are sensible of the necessity of supporting the *President*. For if it be so (of which your assurance leaves me in doubt), and those gentlemen will act up to their convictions, I have no doubt but our political bark will yet weather the tempest. Too many of our politicians of all parties have very weak and unsettled as well as utterly erroneous principles on this very point, and for my own part I believe there is greater danger to be apprehended from the former than from the latter.

The English newspapers suppose that the change in the office of state will have a tendency to the preservation of peace between the United States and Great Britain. Since their late successes in Spain and Portugal, the restoration of the King's health, at least to a degree sufficient to secure the present ministry in their seats and their prospects in the *politics of the north*, they have, as was naturally to be expected, redoubled their insolence. They are plunging into the deepest desperation of paper money, and, like dropsical

[1] James Lloyd, a United States Senator from Massachusetts.

patients at the moment when the disease is past all cure, are beginning to discuss with themselves whether it is or is not dangerous. I have read the debates in Parliament on the Bullion Reports. Mr. Perceval has not yet ascertained whether the bank paper is or is not *depreciated.* Mr. Canning turns periods to prove how easily Great Britain will hereafter drain off this flood of paper. But both admit that the war must be continued, and that there is no money but paper in quantity adequate to carry it on. Let these principles operate to their full extent, and we shall need no war to redeem our rights or revenge our wrongs. I cannot abandon the hope that we shall escape this war.

. . . . . .

## TO THE SECRETARY OF STATE

No. 55. [JAMES MONROE]

ST. PETERSBURG, 22 June, 1811.

SIR:

The ship *Horace*, Captain Thomas Leach, belonging to Mr. William Gray of Boston, arrived at Cronstadt last Sunday from Boston. She had been boarded off Christiansand by the British armed vessel *Plover*, Captain Campbell, who not only broke open and read letters directed to me which had been entrusted to Captain Leach, but detained him five hours on board the *Plover*, took from him two of his men, named Francis Flood and Samuel Patterson, both having protections, and the former of whom Captain Leach has no doubt of being a native American, and put on board the *Horace* two of his own sick men, named Myrick Winslow and John Gray, both British subjects, unserviceable as sea-

men, and fit only for a hospital of invalids. Captain Leach has made his protest, conformably to the laws of the United States, but I think proper to mention this transaction to you, as presenting a new feature in the conduct of a British naval commander—the abandonment of his own sick people to the mercy and humanity of a stranger, while he forced that stranger to take them. He also knew that the *Horace* was bound to a country at war with Great Britain, where these invalid British seamen would be liable to be held as prisoners, and where Captain Leach could not protect them. I shall inform Mr. Smith, the chargé d'affaires of the United States at London, of these circumstances, and whatever the principles of the British Government may be with regard to the rest of Captain Campbell's procedure, I presume his treatment of his own men will be thought deserving of their attention.[1]

The *Horace's* destination was Stettin or Dantzig, but from the information which Captain Leach received in passing the Sound of the danger to which any American vessel would be exposed in approaching either of those, or any other Prussian port, he was in a manner compelled to come immediately to this country; and unfortunately found upon his arrival that the principal part of his cargo consists of

[1] "I omitted to inform you in my last that Lord Castlereagh on the 5th of March, immediately after his coming into office, wrote me an answer to a note addressed by my predecessor Mr. Smith to Lord Wellesley, relative to the conduct of the commanding officer of the British ship *Plover* towards the American ship *Horace*. He states as the result of an examination instituted in this matter by the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty, that no letters, public or private, were broken open, and that no complaint was made by the master of the *Horace*. As to the seamen, Flood and Patterson, they were supposed at the time to be Englishmen, but it appearing on examination that they are American citizens, an order has been given for their discharge. Lord Castlereagh adds that he has no doubt that this explanation of the conduct of Capt. Campbell will appear perfectly satisfactory!" *Jonathan Russell to John Quincy Adams*, April 7, 1812. Ms.

articles, the importation of which is prohibited and which according to the letter of the commercial ordinance now in force, are to be destroyed at the port where they arrive.[1] As there could be no possible intention of fraud or of an attempt at a contraband trade in this case, I have written a note to Count Romanzoff stating the circumstances, and expressing my hope that the permission of re-exporting this merchandise would be granted. There is another vessel, the *Superior*, belonging to Messrs. Pratt and Kintzing of Philadelphia, under circumstances nearly similar, and which I have included in the application. I have also seen this morning the Minister of Finance, Mr. Gourieff, who is now at the head of the Commercial Department and have urged to him the equitable grounds for exempting these cases from the literal rigor of the ordinance. He assured me that he should this day make his report to the Emperor, upon whose personal decision it must depend, and that it would be in favor of a permission for re-exportation.

*In some general conversation which, on the occasion of this interview, Mr. Gourieff introduced, he enquired with some earnestness, what was the state of the political relations between the United States and Great Britain. You will have perceived by several of my late despatches how anxious an interest the Russian government feels on this point, and how strong their desire is, that the misunderstanding between us and England may not kindle into a war. It is easily to be seen how they think it would affect their interests, and why they are so averse to the result. At the same time I must repeat, that neither the Emperor nor any of his ministers has ever expressed officially to me (nor any of the ministers with whom I have had official communications, unofficially) any sentiment on the subject, other than a*

[1] Skins, which were liable to confiscation, and cotton, with which the market was glutted.

*desire to know the state of things as they are. I told Mr. Gourieff that so long as the present English ministry remained in power, their principles on the subjects of difference between the two nations left me no hope or expectation that we should ever be upon terms of harmony with them, but that I hoped and believed it would not come to a state of absolute war. He then spoke to me of the English ministry in terms so similar to those lately used to me by Count Romanzoff, and which were reported in my last number, that I am strongly impressed with the belief that the opinion itself came from a higher source, and had been expressed to both the ministers from a source, where opinion was authority. Indeed this opinion is at present by no means singular. The successful defense of Portugal, the prospect of the expulsion of the French from Spain, the fall of the Isle of France, and the attitude already assumed between Russia and France, have gathered a lustre round the Wellesley administration, which it requires duration to render genuine, but which is already quite sufficient to dazzle. As this power of opinion rises in favor of them, it falls in regard to France, and the Emperor Napoleon will ere long find it necessary by some new achievement, of conquest or of terror, to redeem that irresistible influence, which, since his peace with Austria, has been insensibly slipping from his hands. This is the very cause which leads me most to apprehend that he will attempt to gather his new laurels in the north. There are many indications that he will soon abandon the contest for Portugal, and perhaps the unconquered part of Spain, and give his forces another direction.*[1]

I have received a letter from Captain Snow of the ship *Hercules*, taken and carried into Dantzig by a privateer under French colors, and he has sent me a copy of his protest. He complains that the owners of the privateer, immediately on the arrival of the *Hercules* at Dantzig had her discharged,

[1] Cypher.

turned her officers and crew ashore, allowed him to have nothing to do with ship or cargo, and after twenty-five days had not sent his papers to Paris. Notwithstanding an application which he made to the French consul, they refused to give any support to his crew, who at the same time were not allowed to leave the place. Three other American vessels with their people and their cargoes are in the same situation. It is to be hoped they will speedily obtain relief from the orders of the French government. They ought to obtain immediate restoration of their vessels and cargoes. But I am afraid that it is already beyond the power of the French government itself.

*The project mentioned in some of my late letters, as being under discussion before the Imperial Council, is still discussed. Their meetings are not public, but their secrets are kept like those of all deliberate assemblies. Their plan is comprehensive, and would introduce an entire new organization of the government. Some parts of it have already been decided upon, and adopted but the Chancellor is averse to the honors which would exalt him out of his Department of Foreign Affairs. I think this part of the plan will not succeed at present. There is nothing yet from France but fair words.*

*A peace with Turkey is expected. To obtain it, the rumor is, that Russia has proposed to leave the two provinces which she has already incorporated with the Empire to be* [one-half line of cipher not deciphered] *independent of her and of the Porte. It is supposed that this will be accepted, of which I doubt.* I have the honor to be, etc.

## TO JOHN ADAMS

ST. PETERSBURG, 25 June, 1811.

MY DEAR SIR:

The fortieth American vessel which has arrived at Cronstadt since the opening of this year's navigation, was the *John Adams*, Captain Thomas Downing, from Savannah. She arrived last Saturday the 22nd instant, and the first which sailed for America was the *Laurel*, Captain Burnham, belonging to Mr. Gray, by whom I sent the letter to you of which the inclosed is a press copy. She sailed the 10th instant, and I hope will arrive in season to save your eyes the trouble of tracing the characters of the copy. For seven months of the year my great embarrassment was to devise means of sending my letters for America to places from which they could be dispatched, but now the opportunities of direct conveyance are so numerous, that it is impossible to write by them all. Hitherto the American trade to this country has been an advantageous one to those of our merchants who have adventured in it. But this year they have already so completely glutted the market here, and are continually pouring in such profuse additional supplies, that most of them will find it altogether unprofitable, if not ruinous speculation. Indeed there are numbers of those daily arriving which were not destined for this country, but which have been compelled to come as to the only place where they could obtain admission. They continue to be received with every encouragement on the part of the government, and with a degree of favor enjoyed by no other nation. The general principle of this favor is to be found in the circumstances which at this moment render the American trade of very

high unusual importance to the interests of Russia herself. Particular instances result from the personal dispositions of the Emperor Alexander, to whose special orders I have been often indebted, when they were not to be obtained from any of his ministers. On this subject, however, it becomes me to speak with reserve, and especially to request that no more extracts from my letters may be published in the newspapers. In those which I wrote you and my mother and brother the last autumn, I felt myself called to explain to you the origin and source of the charges against me which had appeared first in the London prints, and afterwards copied in the federal papers in America—that I was meddling here for the exclusion of *American* vessels. The impudence as well as the falsehood of this accusation provoked me in my letter to my mother, to lay perhaps too much stress upon the success of my own exertions here in favor of the American commerce. When it came back here in the newspapers, although there was nothing in it but was strictly true, and very little but was known to be so by numbers of people in this city, yet I confess to you my own letter had to my own judgment an air of vainglorious boasting which mortified me, and of which I had not been at all conscious when writing it in confidence to one of the dearest of my friends. I know very well that the motive for the publication was affection for me, and an earnest wish to make my justification as public as had been the assertion; but when once justified to my friends, I was willing to bear an unfounded imputation in public rather than to incur that of blazoning my own shield. There were, however, other considerations far more important than any personal concerns of mine which warn me not to permit the publication of my letters. My idea may perhaps be best illustrated by the fact I shall now mention. The extract of my letter which was first pub-

lished in the *Palladium* has been sent and particularly pointed out to the government here by Mr. Daschkoff, with some observations of his own. It has, therefore, excited the attention of the Emperor as well as of his Minister of Foreign Affairs. I have no reason to believe that it has affected me disadvantageously in their minds, but there may be facts stated there, which they as well as I know to be true, but which they are not pleased to see publicly stated under the authority of my name. There are *enemies* and *allies* and *subjects*, whose interests and passions and politics are deeply involved in the subjects touched upon in that extract. The human body is sometimes in such a state of nervous irritability, that the slightest whisper is sufficient to throw it into a convulsion. The body politic of the civilized world is now in almost as diseased a state. If I were to write letters for the express purpose of having them published in America, I could not pen a line of them without calculating its probable operation in France, in England, and in Russia, as well as upon the public opinion in America. Besides the restraint under which everything thus composed must be produced, there are such great, sudden and violent changes in the complicated machine of European and American politics, that I doubt whether it would be possible to make up for publication anything which, in the interval between the time of writing and that of producing its effects, might not entirely lose its beneficial operation, and turn from an antidote into a bane. The favor extended to the American commerce in Russia since my arrival here is, I believe, now well known in every part of Europe and of the United States. Of the share of credit which I might claim in obtaining it I am not a competent judge, and however I may be tempted to overrate it, I have at least no pretension to any other merit than that of having done my duty. The

course of events, or rather as I ought to consider it, the smile of Providence, has propitiated my endeavors, and to Providence I hope I am duly grateful for it. But I am and have been fully aware that this favorable state of things is liable to change, and that events might occur from day to day as inauspicious to the success of any exertions in my power as hitherto they have been promotive to it. Above all I have been convinced, that for what I could attribute only to the personal kindness and good will of the sovereign, the most useful gratitude and that which would be most pleasing to him would be, to conceal rather than to ostentatiously divulge his favor. And one of the reasons which occasions my regret that I cannot now return home is, that there are changes here to which I must look forward as more than probable, and under which the motives for favoring America will be far less urgent than they have been hitherto.

Your disposition to draw from everything that you read, whether poetry, romance or history, speculations upon government, with your own description of this state of mind, delighted me exceedingly; not only as I could see in it the likeness of the picture, but as it struck me with the accuracy of self observation in the painter. I rejoice that meditation upon government, as resulting from and combined with the nature of man, has been throughout your life the most strongly marked feature in your character, because I am convinced that your country has already derived great benefit from this cause and its effects, and because I am equally confident that posterity will derive still more advantage from them. Though you will expect no thanks from your country, perhaps none from posterity, for any good they may enjoy in consequence of your labors, it is my deliberate opinion that this very propensity of your mind is the principal cause, if not the exclusive one, of the *balance*

established as the great and fundamental principle of the American Constitution. Other men may claim details, many of them very ill suited to the system. Some are useful, some injurious and some absurd, but the balance is yours and yours alone. How long it will last I shall not undertake to say; but there it is in the general Constitution, and in most of the particular ones. Let the powers of earth and the other place be conjured as they have been against it, they can devise nothing to take the place of this balance without falling into anarchy or despotism. In your own country mankind have, therefore, to a certain extent and to a very great extent, listened to you and to nature. So far as they have listened to you, their systems of government have hitherto proved highly prosperous. But whatever our future history is destined to be, the principle of the balance is now so deeply rooted in our institutions, that it can no more be eradicated from them than your agency in introducing it can be contested.

You have in one or two of your letters reported to me the opinion of certain of your correspondents upon the review of Ames, not without a little friendly sarcasm upon my distrust of the talents of Americans at panegyric. I do not dislike praise, but I am certainly much more covetous of approbation. Racine, the poet, once said that all the praise he had ever received had not given him so much pleasure as any one instance of censure however slight, however unjust, and however contemptible, had given him pain. My feelings are not tuned to such exquisite sensibility as those of Racine, but censure gives me more pain than any applause but yours and my mother's can give me of enjoyment. It is much sweeter to my soul to see my friends, my country, and even my enemies, made wiser, better or happier by any act of mine, than it would be to hear the loudest concert of ap-

plause that the united voices of the whole human race could produce. There is so much of this thing called praise which springs from friendship, from prejudice, from party spirit, from flattery, from interest, and even from the bad passions, that I consider very little of it as genuine, and set but a low value upon it. I value your applause, because I consider it as evidence of a duty, one of the greatest duties discharged.

. . . . . .

## TO THE SECRETARY OF STATE

No. 56. [JAMES MONROE]

ST. PETERSBURG, 29 June, 1811.

SIR:

On Monday last I received a note from Mr. Gourieff, the Minister of the Finances, informing me that in consequence of my conversation with him (Mr. Gourieff) the preceding Saturday, which I mentioned to you in my letter of that day, his Majesty the Emperor had been pleased to order that permission for the re-exportation *by sea* should be granted for the prohibited articles which had been brought by the two ships *Horace* and *Superior*, and that this re-exportation might be either in the same vessels, or in any others at the option of the parties interested.

The *Ellen Maria*, Captain Adams, had sailed in April, 1810, from Lisbon for Riga. She was taken by a Danish privateer and detained nearly twelve months, before her final acquittal in the prize courts of Denmark. She then completed her voyage, although an ordinance of May, 1810, confirmed by the commercial regulations of the present year prohibited the entry of vessels in Russia, from the European

ports of Portugal. But all the vessels which had sailed from Lisbon before notice of the prohibition, and which had arrived in the course of the last year, had been admitted. On her arrival at Riga, the *Ellen Maria* was denied admission. Captain Adams wrote me a letter, and I wrote a note to Count Romanzoff, claiming in favor of this vessel the application of the principle upon which those that arrived last year had been admitted. Mr. Gourieff informed me that he had dispatched his orders to Riga to that effect.

In my letter of 26 March, number 43, I mentioned the case of the *Eliza*, a vessel which had arrived last year from the Island of Teneriffe at Archangel, and a part of whose cargo had been condemned for a supposed irregularity of her papers. This part of the sentence is now reversed by a decision of the Imperial Council, and the wines are to be restored on the production of the regular documents.

Several vessels which on their passage from the United States have been taken, or driven by stress of weather into English ports, where some of them had been detained the whole winter, have also by special permission been admitted. Upwards of forty American vessels with cargoes have arrived already at Cronstadt, and a proportionable number at Riga and at Archangel. American vessels are, with very few exceptions, the only ones that arrive loaded. In consequence of the seizures and confiscations of vessels which come here, and to Swedish and Prussian ports last year, *with licenses*, it has been found impossible this year to effect insurance upon such adventures in London for the present season. A contract for ten or twelve thousand tons of hemp for the use of the British navy has been made here; but for its transportation they have been obliged to send out a number of vessels, under flags of all colors, and with licenses, but in ballast. These are among the consequences of the

Orders in Council, and the licenses. Their effect here at this time is to give the market exclusively to the Americans. This is now so notorious, and is felt so deeply by the English interest, that I would ask nothing more than a continuance of the present state of things one year longer to sicken the most stubborn of the British ministers with their Orders of Council and their licenses. A peace between Russia and England would produce a total revolution in the commerce of the Baltic. Perhaps the British ministers rely upon this event. They may have relied upon it too much, and prematurely. At least it is clear beyond all question that unless they do make this peace the operation of their Orders of Council will henceforth in these quarters lie almost entirely against themselves.

I wish it were in my power to speak as favorably of the proceedings of France towards our commerce, as of those of Russia. Since the last non-importation act, passed at the close of the late session of Congress, we are told that the sequester upon the vessels from the United States, arrived in France since the 2nd of November last, has been removed. But the tariff remains unaltered, and the duties are equivalent to prohibitions.

In the course of the last week, Mr. Harris has received a letter from Captain Irion, master of one of the four American vessels carried into Dantzig. He informs him that twenty-two American seamen, belonging to those four vessels have been compelled to march from Dantzig to Antwerp, where they are to be forced to serve on board the French fleet. I suppose that we shall be told this is a retaliation upon the British for their impressment of our men.

The discussions between this country and France are yet in a state of stagnation. Nothing is settled. It would seem as if nothing was doing for a settlement. It is intimated

here that great hopes of a conciliatory nature are entertained from the reports which it is supposed the Duke de Vicence, the late French ambassador, carried with him. Much is expected from the disastrous state of the French cause in Spain. But whether the result of that will be to preserve the peace, or to precipitate the war in the north, is not perfectly ascertained. A report of the Emperor Napoleon's speech to the Council of Commerce on the 24th of March has been published in a Danish gazette, printed at Altona. It differs less in substance than in the expressions from that of which I sent you a translation. It has been formally and officially disavowed by the French ambassador to Count Romanzoff. But this speech has rung like thunder all over Europe. The Russian government know, beyond all possible disavowal, that the substance of it was made. They expect the war as it was threatened, and are prepared to meet it. They will not abandon their commerce and particularly that of America. They have the whole military force of the Empire on the frontiers and ready for action, and are now probably not to be intimidated.

The Imperial Council are still occupied with the project which has been mentioned in several of my late letters. The Chancellor now believes that the part of it which was to remove him from the Department of Foreign Affairs will not be accomplished. But I think this question will depend upon the solution of the present controversies with France. If they terminate in war, he must go out. As long as the peace continues it is scarcely possible that any other person should come in.

The Portuguese minister, who has so long been expected, the Chevalier Bezarra,[1] arrived here the day before yesterday. He landed at Reval, from the British frigate *Fisgard*,

[1] Bezarra had been Portuguese Minister in Holland 1802–1810.

which was sent with a flag of truce to convey him and his family. He has this day seen Count Romanzoff, but has not yet had his audience of the Emperor. I am very respectfully, etc.

## TO ABIGAIL ADAMS

St. Petersburg, 30 June, 1811.

I have now to acknowledge the receipt of your number six, dated 23 February, brought by the *Henry*, Captain Harris, a vessel of which we had heard nearly a month since, and which has at length arrived after a passage from Boston of one hundred days. The arrivals from America now crowd upon one another in multitudes, which I am afraid will prove not very profitable to many of the adventurers. From Quincy we have yet nothing later than 4 March, but letters and newspapers have been received by other Americans here to the beginning of May.

The Massachusetts election appears to agitate the Americans in Europe almost exclusively of all the other elections going on at the same time in many parts of the Union. I see paragraphs in the newspapers, but hear not a syllable from any other quarter. But American federalists in this city have received letters from their friends in London and in Gothenburg, in high exultation, announcing the election of Mr. Gore [1] by a majority of more than the three thousand votes. But other Americans of different politics contest the validity of this return, and affirm that Mr. Gerry and Mr. Gray have been reëlected though by a reduced majority compared with that of the last year. Why this extreme anxiety and concern for the *Massachusetts* elections? Is it

[1] The federalist candidates were Christopher Gore and William Phillips.

Mr. *Gore* for whose election all this enthusiasm is harbored? I think it by no means difficult to account for. There is much foreign hope and fear involved in these Massachusetts elections. All the rest, even New York, are despaired of. But the Massachusetts federal politicians have got to talk so openly, and with such seeming indifference not to say readiness for a dissolution of the Union, they are so valiant in their threats of resistance to the laws, they seem so resolute for a little experiment upon the *energy* of the Union and its government, that in the prospects of a war with America, which most of the British statesmen now at the helm consider as in the line of wise policy, they and all their partisans calculate boldly and without concealment or disguise upon the coöperation of the Massachusetts federalists. The Massachusetts election, therefore, is a touchstone of national principle, and upon its issue may depend the question of peace and war between the United States and England. However hostile a British ministry may feel against us, they will never venture upon it, until they can depend upon active coöperation with them within the United States. It is from the New England federalists alone that they can expect it, and from them they will doubtless receive it. From the same view of the subject, though prompted by very opposite feelings, I too take a deep interest in the Massachusetts elections. I have known now more than seven years the projects of the Boston faction against the Union. They have ever since that time at least been seeking a pretext and an occasion for avowing the principle. The people, however, have never been ready to go with them, and when at the embargo time they did for a moment get a majority with them, they only verified the old proverb about setting a beggar on horseback. Mr. Quincy has now been at the pains of furnishing them with a new pretext, which will

wear no better than its predecessors. Mr. Quincy should not have quoted me as an authority for a dissolution. He may be assured it is a doctrine that never will have my sanction. It is my attachment to the Union which makes me specially anxious for the result of the Massachusetts elections. They are a contest of life and death for the Union. If that party are not effectually put down in Massachusetts, as completely as they already are in New York, and Pennsylvania, and all the southern and western states, the Union is gone. Instead of a nation, coextensive with the North American continent, destined by God and nature to be the most populous and most powerful people ever combined under one social compact, we shall have an endless multitude of little insignificant clans and tribes at eternal war with one another for a rock, or a fish pond, the sport and fable of European masters and oppressors.[1]

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[1] "There are so many seeds and elements of division, that it is unnecessary to multiply them by premature threats which will not intimidate, and which may perhaps be soon reciprocated. Quincy is very clever, but I cannot read a word without regret that glances at a dismemberment of the Union, though ever so remotely or obscurely. The dangers to American liberty will be increased beyond all Mr. Ames's imaginations, and the independence of both parts of the division would be totally lost by a separation." *John Adams to John Quincy Adams*, January 25, 1811. Ms. "The prophecies of Quincy's imagination are not altogether chimerical, though I hope the fulfilment of them is far, very far remote in futurity." *Ib.* to *Ib.*, February 15, 1811. Ms.

"June 12. By a return of the first day's votes of the Massachusetts election which I find in a New York paper, I perceive that the Executive in Massachusetts has changed hands again. And the course of these elections is so regular, that from the events which must have influenced those of the House of Representatives in May, I have no doubt that the legislative majority has gone back to its station of the years preceding the last. It is obvious that this struggle will be continued as long as the war in Europe shall last. My prayer to God is, that it may eventuate to the good of my country." Ms. Diary.

## TO WILLIAM JONES

St. Petersburg, 5 July, 1811.

Sir:

I have received the letter which you did me the honor of writing me the 31st of January last, relating to Claude Gabriel, to whom I have read and explained it in the fullest manner, at the same time that I delivered to him the letter from his wife Prudence, that was inclosed with it.

At the time when he entered the service of the Emperor, the Minister of the Police, by order of his Majesty, who did not know that the ship to which he belonged was gone leaving him behind, sent to me a message that the man was desirous of engaging himself in the Emperor's service, who had consented to take him, if he could be disengaged from that of the ship; that his Majesty would indemnify the owners of the ship, if they should sustain a loss in the man, and I could ascertain their demand on that account; and that he would also defray all expenses which might be occasioned for the passage of Prudence and her children to this country. As the ship was gone I undertook to give information to the owners of the Emperor's offer to indemnify them, and knowing that Mr. William Gray of Boston would probably send vessels to this country the ensuing spring, I wrote to him requesting him, if he conveniently could, to provide a passage for the woman and children in one of them. I wrote also to Mr. Russell at Paris, who had been the supercargo and as I understood part owner of the ship *President Adams*, informing him that if the owners had any demand for damages occasioned by the loss of the man, the Emperor had ordered that it should be satisfied. From Mr. Russell's answer I understood that although the loss of the man was

considered as a serious inconvenience, no demand for indemnity would be made.

From the tenor of your letter I am led to believe that you consider the man as being detained against his own will, which is far from being the case. He is perfectly well satisfied with his condition here, which is a very advantageous one, and exceedingly disappointed at his wife's refusal to come with his children to join him here. He has obtained permission from his Majesty to go himself to the United States, with a view to return with them, which he hopes the health of his wife and the security which she and his family will derive from being with him will enable him to accomplish. He informs me that he is not a citizen of the United States, but he considers himself as a free man, and best qualified to judge of the manner in which he is to provide for himself and his family. I have in consequence of your letter urged upon him in the most earnest manner the duty which he owes to his wife and children, of which he appears to be fully sensible. But he is firmly convinced that for their ease and comfort as well as his own, the most eligible condition within his reach is that which he now enjoys, and he has neither inclination nor intention to renounce it.

He will probably arrive in Providence shortly after this letter will come to your hands. I presume that in all events he will make a suitable provision for his family, so that whether he returns hither or remains with them in the United States, your solicitude on his account and theirs will be relieved by the knowledge, that whatever course he may ultimately determine upon will be the result of his own choice. I am etc.

## TO THE SECRETARY OF STATE

No. 57. [JAMES MONROE]

ST. PETERSBURG, 6 July, 1811.

SIR:

The speech of the Emperor Napoleon to the legislative assembly of France at the opening of their session, the 16th of last month, was brought by an extraordinary courier from the Russian ambassador in France to his government and arrived here on Wednesday last. It had been a subject of great expectation, as it was foreseen that it would indicate the prospects, whether of peace or war, between France and Russia which were known to depend altogether upon the will of the French Emperor. Its complexion is altogether pacific and has confirmed, almost to a certainty, the hopes of those, who have for some time past flattered themselves that the war will not break out during the present year. If the true intention of the speaker were to be collected with unerring accuracy from the purport of the speech, not a doubt could remain upon the question. The name of Russia is not mentioned in the speech, but there is frequent allusion to the state of the relations between her and France, and always in obscure and ambiguous terms. He says, that he has no occasion to call for any new taxes or impositions upon the people, although he had three months before placed one hundred millions at the disposition of his ministers of war, because *he then thought it necessary*. Three months before was precisely the time, when he made his far famed speech to the Council of Commerce and Manufactures. He says that he wishes nothing but what is in the treaties

that he has concluded: that he will never sacrifice the blood of his people for interests, which are not *immediately* those of his empire, and that he flatters himself the peace of the continent will not be disturbed. There seems to be in these expressions a promise that he will give satisfaction to Russia with regard to the Duchy of Oldenburg and to the extraordinary armaments in Poland; but the strongest of all the pledges of peace is the assurance that he will not ask for any additional taxes.

By the peace of the continent, however, he is not to be understood as including the peace of Spain. There, he says, it is that the struggle against Carthage is to be decided. It is to be finished by a *thunderbolt* which will avenge Europe and Asia by terminating this second Punic war, but which will be delayed until England is exhausted, until she shall have felt the evils which for twenty years she has been so cruelly pouring upon the Continent, and until half her families shall be covered with the funeral veil.

I observed in one of my last letters, that there were many indications, that he would soon abandon the contest for Portugal, and perhaps, the unconquered part of Spain. The declaration to the contrary here appears to be very explicit. But Europe has already heard him at one time threaten to plant the imperial eagles on the walls of Lisbon, where they have not yet been seen to perch, and at another time to drive the frightened leopard into the sea, though the leopard still ranges the Spanish plains, undismayed. In the action so glorious to the French arms to which he alludes, French blood flowed in streams, as copious, at least, as the English, and the fact is not concealed from the world, however it may present itself to him, that all the most illustrious of his generals have failed to accomplish hitherto his plans of conquest in the Peninsula. The most distinguished of them

all, Masséna, the spoilt child of victory,[1] at the moment when the Emperor thus announced the future thunderbolt, was in Paris, though not present to hear him; just returned crowned with no laurels from a campaign in which he had in the face of a most attentive world been notoriously worsted, and to add the last drop of bitterness to the gall of his mortification, worsted by an English general. Until the issue of this campaign, the prospect of defending Spain and Portugal appeared so desperate to all the best informed politicians and military men in Europe, that the British ministry incurred no slight censure of extreme rashness for venturing to stake anything upon it. That they have staked and are staking more upon it than the prize, if they ever obtain it, will ever be worth to their cause, is my own opinion. I do not very clearly see what advantage the British nation will derive should they succeed in driving the French out of Spain, unless they can keep it as a conquest of their own. For if France should spontaneously withdraw all her armies north of the Pyrenees, Spain, by whomsoever governed, must in the nature of things very soon find herself in the same dependence upon France which for so many years has involved her in the vortex of the French political system.

But on the other hand, the war in Spain has from its first commencement been extremely unpopular in France. No radiance of glory has sufficed to cover, and no accumulation of power has been adequate to suppress the character of the transactions in which it originated. The losses, the disasters, the disgraces, which France has so frequently suffered in the course of this war have rendered it as odious as at all times it has been thought useless. The generals and armies sent into the country where a constant experience has proved that neither plunder nor honor is to be acquired are all dis-

[1] Bonaparte had called him "enfant chéri de la victoire."

satisfied with the service, and the Emperor himself has occasionally manifested his weariness of it. The opinion is fast gaining ground, throughout Europe, that the conquest of the Peninsula is more than he can achieve, and if the *thunderbolt* lingers much longer, it will be set at defiance in regions other than Portugal or Spain.

As the probability of another winter of peace in this quarter increases, the present administration recovers strength. It is now generally believed that the political system will undergo no change at present. Whether the British government have made any advances for a separate peace or not, I cannot positively say, but if they have, it has been without success. The seizures and confiscations of the last year have produced such an effect, that no insurance can be made in London on goods brought into the Baltic by licensed vessels, and all those sent here for English accounts come this year in ballast.

I have this day received the despatches from your Department, brought by Captain Bainbridge, consisting only of duplicates—of the commission as an Associate Justice of the Supreme Court of the United States, the letter of leave to the Emperor of Russia, and the letter to me from the Secretary of State of 26 February.

In my letter to you of 2 June, I had the honor of informing you that I had found myself under the necessity of declining the appointment to a seat upon the bench. However reluctantly I adopted this determination, the situation of my family rendered it indispensable. From the indications of public gazettes and of private letters, I have learnt the probability that a successor to this mission has been appointed, and may shortly be expected here.[1] In which case, after transmitting to him the affairs of public trust, I shall

[1] Robert Smith, late Secretary of State.

remain here in my individual capacity until the state of my family will admit of our embarking for the United States, that is, in all probability, until next June. . . .

## TO THOMAS BOYLSTON ADAMS

ST. PETERSBURG, 10 July, 1811.

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As long as the waters flow we have very frequent and often very recent intelligence from our country. The public news we generally get from the gazettes. For example I find in the Boston papers which I have seen to 8 May, that you were one of the commissioners appointed to go into the district of Maine, and that you were at Wiscasset the first day of that month. I was happy to hear so much as that of you and of so late a date, but I marvelled that you had mentioned nothing of this appointment in any of your letters. The first accounts that we had of the Massachusetts elections (they came from England), were that Mr. Gerry and Mr. Gray were superseded by the federal candidates. This I find was a miscalculation; but the complexion of both branches of the legislature remains yet very uncertain. Massachusetts appears still to depend upon foreign politics.

The *Port Folio* critique upon my lectures has never presented itself to me, neither am I at all anxious to see it. I never heard of its existence but by your letter of 22 January. If it is as dull as the Knickerbocker History, I should choose to be excused from reading it. Whatever may be my fate elsewhere, I am sure I shall never have an *impartial* critic in America while I am myself alive. No one but a friend or foe will take the trouble to review me, or a mongrel of both breeds like the *Anthologist*. As to the *Port Folio*, to which

you and I once rendered so many thankless services, I expect as little justice from it as from all the other federal common sewers of literature and politics in America. How the *Port Folio* under all its metamorphoses has lived so long is to me unaccountable. I think it has now received its death wound from Walsh,[1] whose Review will be edited with more talents, more industry, more consistency and incomparably more address. I have seen Walsh's pamphlet on France [2] and the first number of his Review. Making allowances for the prejudices and passions of a violent partisan, his account of France appears to be tolerably correct; but his bombastical enthusiasm for England is not only so absurd, but so full of representations ridiculously false, that it has given me a strong suspicion of his honesty. It looks too much as if it were calculated for the federal swallow (for which no camel is too big), with a cool and deliberate contempt of truth. He has had the *cunning* to declare himself a warm friend to the American revolution. Dennie and the *Anthology* were more candid and more in unison with English passions. Walsh will find it hard, very hard, to get along with his ardor for the American revolution and his worship of John Bull, marching *pari passu*. He sets out with the avowed intention of indoctrinating the people of America to know what is good for themselves. Ames tried that experiment for several of the last years of his life. Timothy [Pickering] labors in the same vineyard, and they, to recommend themselves to their auditory, began by telling them that they were all a pack of knaves, and fools, and madmen. Hopeful disciples to turn into wise, and sober, and virtuous patriots! Walsh is more cunning, too, in this respect. He

[1] Robert Walsh (1784–1859), who began in 1811 to publish a quarterly *The American Review of History and Politics*.

[2] *Letter on the Genius and Disposition of the French Government* (1810).

does not begin so much like the Irish orator with, "you ragged, beggarly, lowly rascallions, I love you, you know I do," but he tells us the country is hideously metamorphosed since the days of Washington, and promises very kindly to change it back again to all its former beauty. There is no character which our federal heroes are so fond of assuming as that of a reformer. But it is not like their charity. It never begins at home.

Mr. Blodget,[1] of Philadelphia, arrived here last week and brought me a letter from our friend S. Ewing. Though it was written last August he mentions having received the copy of my lectures which you had sent him; but does not tell me what I first learnt from Mr. Blodget, that he was married. I believe Dennie now remains the only bachelor of your old circle of intimates at Philadelphia, and he, I understand, lives entirely with Mr. Meredith.

We have had since our first arrival here a continual succession of Americans, so that we dwell among our own people almost as much as if we were at home. The winter before last, sixteen American vessels wintered at Cronstadt, and several at Archangel. Upwards of one hundred and fifty arrived at and sailed from Russian ports last summer. More than thirty passed the last winter in them, and sixty-three have already arrived this summer at Cronstadt, besides twenty or thirty at Archangel and Riga. A large proportion of these vessels have supercargoes or owners, and many of them bring letters of introduction to me. They are for the most part transient acquaintance who remain here only while their business detains them, but they enliven our society, and by their own correspondences with America keep us informed of the principal news in circulation, sooner than we can obtain it from our own. Some of them are natural-

[1] William H. Blodget.

ized Americans, but the greater number are natives of the northern and eastern states as far as Virginia, inclusive. Of the states south or west of that, I think I have not seen a native since I have been in Russia.

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## TO THE SECRETARY OF STATE

No. 58. [JAMES MONROE]

ST. PETERSBURG, 13 July, 1811.

SIR:

In my letter of 2 June I mentioned having received, among the despatches brought by Mr. Erving, a commission for Mr. Samuel Hazard as Consul at Archangel, and that he was not then in this country. He arrived at Cronstadt this day last week, having taken passage in an American vessel from Copenhagen. As by the regulations of the police, it was necessary for him to obtain a passport from the Department of Foreign Affairs before he could come to St. Petersburg, he did not arrive here until last night, and he called on me this morning. I had delivered his commission to one of his friends, to send to him at Cronstadt, where he received it. The only document which had accompanied it was a short letter from the Secretary of State informing him of the appointment. He had received no other communication from your Department. So that he has neither the circular instructions, nor the collection of the laws relating to the duties of our consuls, nor even the knowledge of the private marks by which the genuine American registers of vessels are to be recognized. I have advised him to apply to Mr. Harris for information of the private marks, and for a copy

of the circular instructions, as well as for a loan of the pamphlet containing the collection of the consular laws. Probably these documents so essential to enable him to discharge the duties of his office have been despatched to him by some vessel bound directly to Archangel, and that he will receive them on his arrival there.

Our accounts from England here are to the 14th of last month, and I have seen a file of the *Courier*, a ministerial paper, down to the 11th. From these papers it is evident that at that time the British government was in the full expectation of an immediate war between France and Russia.

The *Courier* states that all the Russian prisoners in England had already embarked to be sent home, and had actually sailed. He asserts that a plan for an alliance offensive and defensive between Russia and Great Britain had been sent from St. Petersburg to the British ministry, who had it under consideration, and it insinuates that France will be under the necessity of employing so large a portion of her forces in the north, that she will not be able to send any reenforcements to her armies in Spain. I have in former letters intimated to you the probability that there was a negotiation en train, between Russia and Great Britain, in London. If it be true that the plan of an alliance has been sent from this country, it has not been through any official department, but by one of those irregular channels which as most likely to escape discovery are often preferred by governments which are not checked by any settled principle of responsibility. It is still more probable that this ostentatious restoration of a few hundred Russian sailors, and these boasts of projected alliance were intended to produce the events they anticipate—to sharpen the jealousies, to multiply the suspicions and to inflame the resentments already existing between France and Russia. At least it might be

supposed they would prevent the French Emperor from sending into Spain the reënforcements necessary to renew the contest for the dominion of the Peninsula.

But while the hopes of a northern coalition were so sanguine in England, all prospect of it had vanished here. Or rather to speak more correctly, no such prospect of a *coalition* against France had ever existed. The real prospect was of a war between France and Russia, in which the whole Rhenish confederation, together with Denmark and Prussia, would have been allies of France; and Sweden and Austria, neutral in the first instance. I have heretofore informed you what the Austrian policy was on that occasion, and I believe she is now not a little mortified and disappointed at the failure of a war, which she flattered herself would add so much to the importance of her friendship in the estimation of both parties. But in the war Russia would have stood alone.

I have told you of the great expectations which were entertained that the Duke de Vicence upon his return to France would produce impressions of a conciliatory nature upon the mind of the Emperor Napoleon. He arrived at Paris on the 5th of June, and the speech of the Emperor to the legislative body on the 16th evidently shows the pacific influence of the assurances and sentiments reported to him by that ambassador upon his return. It is the opinion of all the speculative politicians, the best informed, both here and at Paris, that the intention to expel Russia from Europe is a long settled plan in the French cabinet; that its execution is to be attempted whenever the opportunity shall be favorable; and that in the full confidence that the subjugation of Spain and Portugal would have been completed the last winter, France was preparing by a series of the most offensive pretensions and provocations, for the commence-

ment of the Russian war, immediately after that of the Peninsula should be ended. This policy was in truth pursued so far, and Russia was so deeply exasperated, that there was a short period during which it was doubtful whether Russia would not, as in all probability France had intended she should, commit the first act of hostility; and thus *seem* to be the aggressor. It was the personal prudence and firmness of the Emperor Alexander alone, which averted this catastrophe, and it has, I would fain hope, saved Europe, and will contribute to save America from one bloody and most calamitous war. The formidable attitude of defense assumed by Russia, together with the failure of the Portuguese campaign of Masséna, and the precarious state of the French affairs in Spain, have suspended for this time the prosecution of the project against Russia, and it being now ascertained that she will not on her part commence the attack, the peace of the continent is here universally considered as secured during the present year.

The hopes of a peace between Russia and the Turks, are not so sanguine as they were when I had the honor of writing you last. The Russian armies on the line of the Danube have been so much weakened by detachments to strengthen the Polish frontier that they are scarcely competent to defend what they acquired at such heavy expense the last summer. They are retiring to the left banks of the river. It is said that in proportion to the eagerness for peace manifested by Russia, the Turks rise in their pretensions, until instead of ceding provinces they have come to the point of demanding indemnities for themselves. *There is no doubt but that Russia would restore all that she has acquired for the sake of peace.*[1]

Before the late war between Sweden and Russia, Count

[1] Cypher.

Stedingk had been many years the Swedish ambassador at this court, but without the formal character. He has now taken leave of the Emperor, and returns home. He goes by water, having made a vow that he never would set his foot again in a province, to the cession of which he had been under the necessity of signing his name. But he is obliged to go under a passport or safe-conduct from the British admiral in the Baltic, which he says is as mortifying as it would have been to have gone through Finland. He is a nobleman of the most elevated sentiments and is universally respected. To an American he has peculiar claims of veneration, having served and bled in our cause during the war of our revolution. He was an officer in the French army, and was wounded at the affair of Savannah. I am with great respect etc.

## TO JOHN ADAMS

St. Petersburg, 21 July, 1811.

My Dear Sir:

American vessels are now pouring upon us in floods. I wrote you less than a month since that there had then arrived at Cronstadt forty since the opening of the year's navigation, and already the number exceeds ninety, besides as many more at Archangel and the other Russian ports. They have already glutted the market until they are forced to disgorge, but I hear that they are still coming by the hundred. I am sorry for the adventurers. They will almost universally make ruinous voyages.

To us however they furnish the advantage of bringing numbers of our countrymen, bearers of news and newspapers from the United States, and occasionally, though very rarely, a letter from some one of our friends. Yester-

day morning for instance Captain Boit, of the *Cordelia*, called upon me and delivered me your favor of 23 April, dated from the "Head Quarters of the Lieutenant Governor." I had already received ten days ago your letter of 10 April, which was intended to have been sent by the same opportunity, but which was brought by a Captain Peart. In both these letters you manifest anew the wish for our return, and in one of them repeat the desire that I should accept the judicial office to which I had been appointed.

On this subject my determination was founded upon circumstances, which could not be known to you at the time when your letters were written. I hope they will be sufficient in your mind for my justification. With regard to my acceptance of the office, it is now too late for repentance nearly two months since I declined it. I have not changed my feelings or my opinions. But in your letter of 10 April there seems a suggestion that the state of things in America has increased your idea of the urgency, that I should accept the proffered seat upon the bench. In a former letter you had intimated that refusal of the office would be imputed to *unbridled ambition.*

I suppose there are who would impute it to unbridled ambition, whether I had or had not consented to be *adjudicated.* Because there are who have long since settled it in their own minds, that I am ambitious, and that, as you observe with reference to another person, *all* ambition is boundless. When the mind is predisposed to a certain conclusion in matters of opinion, the facts most irreconcilable with each other serve equally well for premises. For instance, if from my refusal of one of the most distinguished offices in the Union the inference must be drawn, that my motive was unbridled ambition, what would have been the inference from my acceptance of it? Do you think it would have established

me a reputation for meekness and humility? I never was afraid of the reproach of being ambitious. But I have many, many times felt an obligation of duty to sacrifice the sentiment of ambition to my family or my friends, and still oftener have I been irresistibly impelled to sacrifice it merely to tranquillity, not to say to the love of ease.

When I came to Russia my motive doubtless in the opinion of many was ambition. But there were not wanting persons who thought I was sent here for the express purpose of putting me out of the way. More than one of my friends wrote and spoke to me of it as of an *exile*, and it was certainly not a voyage which *I* considered calculated to promote ambitious views. I knew that it was not agreeable to you, and that circumstance alone was enough to take away all pleasure from it. I knew equally well that it was going straight away from the high road of ambition, and so far as related to political prospects retiring into obscurity. My real motive was perfectly simple. The constitutional organ of my country had assigned this to me as my proper post. I saw no reason sufficient to induce me to refuse it. The same constitutional organ has now seen fit to call me home, and to put me, as one of my friends writes me, upon a *high shelf*. How does it appear to you? You welcome it as the means to procure my return, and because it would remove me from the *tourbillon* of politics. But yet you specially wish me to accept, because parties are splitting up, because one secretary is out and another in; because the Governor and Senate of Massachusetts are Republican; because all was uncertainty from Europe, and a special session of Congress was expected.

*In this state of things*, had I accepted and returned home, do you think that a seat upon the bench would have removed me from the *tourbillon* of politics? Do you think it would have been a shelter from the "wind of this

commotion?" I will candidly confess to you that I have no such idea. If my own passions would allow me to stand aloof from all politics, as much as every *judge* ought to, the passions of others would involve me in them. If my heart is sufficiently impartial towards all my countrymen to make me a proper umpire in their controversies, their hearts are not impartial enough to me to make them fit to be judged by me. Is this the phantom of my imagination? I will not give you a dissertation for what you will understand by a hint. My aversion to a judicial office rests chiefly upon this settled opinion—the opinion upon all my experience, all my self observation, all my observation of others in their relations to me.

I have other objections against holding a judicial office, with which I need not trouble the public, and which I should have desired to keep exclusively within my own breast. How shall I disclose them to you, after acknowledging my apprehension that you will disapprove the opinions in which they originate? Pressed as I am by your advice so earnestly and so repeatedly urged, I must however disclose them, and leave the estimate of their weight to your indulgence. Let me say then, that I am deeply dissatisfied with what is called the administration of justice, both in our state and federal courts. That by the principles of their organization and procedures they appear to me in the majority of cases to produce by inevitable necessity the sacrifice of substantial *justice* either to mere *forms* or to general *rules*. I entertain some very heretical opinions upon the merits of that *common law*, so idolized by all the English common lawyers and by all the parrots who repeat their words in America. These opinions have not been adopted hastily or without consideration. They are deeply rooted in my mind, and could not easily be eradicated. In the report of the Senate in the case

of John Smith, and in one or two passages of my lectures, I have given a mere glimpse of some of them. One of my motives for doing it was to feel the public pulse with regard to certain principles. The storm of passion in the Senate and the clamor throughout the nation excited by those very passages of the report, as well as by the enthusiastic approbation of the same passages by another party, both in the Senate and among the people, warned me to be extremely cautious in future how I mingled such edged tools as those in the political controversies of the times. I have not weight and influence enough in my country to bring it over to my opinions, and I have too much independence of spirit to renounce them myself. In any other than a judicial station I have no call to discuss them. There a sense of my duty would often compel me to bring them out, and if I did, you may be assured that neither my life nor the good people of America would be tranquillized by it.

26 July, 1811.

I have been obliged to change my usual place of abode in St. Petersburg; the house in which I resided, and of which I had a lease to the 13th of next June, having been sold and the lease of course annulled. I was fortunate to find a comfortable and beautifully situated house on an island within the bounds of the city, but really a country seat on the banks of the *Nevka.*[1] It had been some months empty for want of a tenant, and being suitable for habitation only during the summer months, its owner was glad to let me have it at a moderate rent. We took it for four months, of which one is nearly past and at the end of which we must again seek for winter lodgings.

I received last evening your favor of April 28, No. 10,

[1] It belonged to Count Tatischeff, and was situated on Apothecaries Island, about three miles from the Summer Garden Gate.

brought me by the *Hugh Johnston*, Captain Johnson,[1] which renews the injunction upon me to accept the appointment which I have refused. I can add nothing to what I have already written you upon this subject. If I could recall my answer to the President declining the office, it must have been by asking that he should keep it vacant for me another year, after it has to the great injury of the public been kept so one twelvemonth. . . . It is still my intention to pass the winter here. I shall have the inclination and, with the blessing of Heaven, hope there will be no insuperable impediment to my return next summer; but not to be a judge, not to usurp the place which ought to be held by Judge Davis.

We have very lately received the account of the action between the frigate *President* and the *Little Belt*.[2] The English ministerial papers assert that the first shot was fired from our frigate. I hope this is not true. But affairs appear to be rapidly coming to the last extremities between the United States and England. A war appears to be inevitable and I lament it, with the deepest affliction of heart and the most painful anticipation of consequences. It is at home that an English war will bring on our heaviest trial, as I presume one of its early effects will be a struggle for the division of the states, which has been so long in contemplation and preparation by New England federalists. Our commerce too will suffer most severely by the war, though it will continue to be carried on to a considerable extent by contraband or by licenses.

It is upon the fate of the war in Spain that the fate of the world is suspended. So says the Emperor Napoleon, and so speak the actions of the British government. We are now

[1] William Johnson.

[2] May 16. See Henry Adams, *History*, V. 26.

in expectation of the news of a battle. But why should I say this to you, when if such a battle has been fought, you will hear of its issue nearly as soon as we shall. I could tell you indeed of a battle in Turkey, between General Kutuzoff and the Grand Vizier. Last Sunday I attended the Te Deum to celebrate the victory of the Russians. But the Russians have something now upon their hands more serious than a Turkish war. Digito compressu labellum. The year 1811 is passing in peace. Yours in duty.

## TO THE SECRETARY OF STATE

No. 59. [JAMES MONROE]

ST. PETERSBURG, 22 July, 1811.

SIR:

Mr. Calhoun of Philadelphia arrived here last week after a short passage of thirty-nine days from the Capes of Delaware to Cronstadt. He brought me two packets under the seal of your Department, containing a file of the *National Intelligencer* from 16 February to 1 June, and informed me that you had not sent any other despatches by him, under the expectation that upon his arrival here I should have embarked already upon my passage to the United States. This expectation would have been realized but for circumstances which I have had the honor of intimating to you in a former letter, and which I have still every reason to expect will necessarily detain me here until next June.

This state of things was already suggested by me to the President of the United States in a letter which I had the honor of writing him on the 7th of January last; and it prescribed to me the duty of declining the appointment as

judge of the Supreme Court of the United States, with which I had been honored. I have hitherto presumed that it was not the President's intention that I should divest myself of my official character here, by delivering the letter of leave without being prepared immediately afterwards to take my departure. But I informed Count Romanzoff that I had received that letter, and that I should keep it subject to the further orders which I might receive. It may be proper for me now to add my wish, that the President's final arrangements respecting the mission to this Court may be separated entirely from considerations relating personally to me or to the situation of my family. Should he judge the appointment of another person expedient, or should he deem the continuance of a minister here no longer necessary, I shall readily deliver the letter of leave whenever I shall be apprised of his intentions.

The navigation of the Baltic has, during the present season, been liberated from many of the restrictions and vexations to which it had been liable for the American flag during the two preceding years. The passage of the Sound has not been blockaded by the British, and the captures by Danish privateers have almost entirely ceased. The liberality which has uniformly characterized the policy of the Russian government in regard to our commerce, has been more strongly marked than at any former period. The general measures have multiplied the facilities of admission to our vessels, and special indulgences have been in many cases granted to those which were not within the provisions of the law. But so interwoven is the struggle between good and evil in human affairs, that it has now become questionable whether even these indulgences and these facilities will ultimately prove advantageous to those for whom they have been granted. Nearly two hundred

American vessels laden with valuable cargoes have already entered the ports of Russia since the commencement of this season's navigation—one hundred of them at the port of Cronstadt—and as many more are expected. Their cargoes consist altogether of five or six articles of what are called colonial merchandise—sugar, coffee, cotton, indigo and dye-woods; and they have so glutted the markets with these articles that scarcely any sales of them can now be effected at any prices, and those who are compelled to sell, do it to the total loss of the article. The prices of the articles which are to be taken for return cargoes in the meantime rise in proportion to the extraordinary demand for them thus produced, and the course of exchange rises in like manner. The French tariff, which is enforced in Saxony and Prussia, chokes the passage to reëxportation, and the national bankruptcy of Austria is followed by such a stagnation of all commercial affairs in that country that it affords no better issue than its neighbors.

The British Orders of Council, and the French continental system opposed against them, are undoubtedly the causes of this state of things. The object of the former being to monopolize the commerce of the world, that of the latter is to cramp and cripple all commerce, as a medium through which Britain must receive a wound. There is no symptom of relaxation in this policy on either side. We have just been informed of the condemnation in England of the *Fox*, and many other American vessels, for being bound to France. At the same time the French minister, Montalivet, was telling the Legislative Assembly that the continental system had just begun, and that France can easily bear its inconveniences for ten years to come. Each of the parties endeavors to keep up the courage of its subjects and dependent allies, by representing its antagonist as at the last

gasp; while in reality, the means and resources for its continuance are but too great on both sides.

Notwithstanding the threatened thunderbolt of the Emperor Napoleon, and the reiteration by his minister, Montalivet, of the promise that Spain shall be subdued, the only evidence now admissible of the determination to renew that contest, will be the sending of large reënforcements to the French armies. It is said that such reënforcements have been sent and an intimation has been given me that the Emperor Napoleon intends to go there for a short time in person. This has become so necessary for the maintenance of his political supremacy in Europe, that it seems the only alternative left him, if he seriously adheres to the conquest of Spain. But upon the issue of that campaign will depend more than ever the fate of Europe. *It is beyond a doubt that he will not be molested when he commences it by Russia. If he succeeds, what his policy to Russia will be I will not say. If he fails the Emperor Alexander's personal determination and the system of the present Chancellor are essentially pacific. But it may be doubted whether either of them would stand the test of another successful British campaign in Spain.*

*In the meantime the negotiations between France and Russia, tho' less ambiguous, are becoming daily more equivocal than at the period when instant war was expected. The professions of amity, tho' still repeated, have become cooler, and are expressed with more reserve: with the protestations of pacific intentions on the part of France and promises of indemnity for the Duchy of Oldenburg have been mingled some recriminations on account of the Russian commercial orders, and some manifestation of displeasure at the extraordinary armaments of Russia along the frontiers of Poland. To all this it has not been difficult for Russia to reply, and so the questions upon which the parties are at variance are spinning out for discussions. There is how-*

*ever one remarkable fact of which I am assured from a quarter deserving of confidence. It is, that the Emperor Napoleon has expressly declared to the Russian ambassador that he is satisfied with the conduct of Russia in reference to the continental system and perfectly convinced that she has had no communication with England incompatible with her engagements with France. It does not appear even that he has taken amiss the arrival of a Portuguese minister here in a British frigate, or the restoration of the Russian prisoners who have been landed from another British frigate at Reval.*[1]

A Te Deum was yesterday celebrated at the imperial chapel for a victory obtained by General Kutuzoff, (the successor of the late General Count Kaminsky) over the Turkish army under the immediate command of the Grand Vizier. It was in the neighborhood of Rustchuk. But the Russians are altogether on the defensive. The hopes of peace are less sanguine that they were last month. The Turks demand not only their lost provinces, but a sum of money and the Crimea, by way of indemnity.

I have received from Liebau, a small packet, enclosing a third copy of the *National Intelligencer* of 6 and 8 December last. I mention it merely from the principle of acknowledging the receipt of every packet coming from your Department. I am very respectfully etc.

[1] Cypher.

## TO THE SECRETARY OF STATE

No. 60. [JAMES MONROE]

ST. PETERSBURG, 28 July, 1811.

SIR:

I went one day last week,[1] with Mr. Hazard, and introduced him personally to the Chancellor Count Romanzoff, through whose department as Minister of Foreign Affairs, the *exequatur* was to be obtained. For this purpose I had supposed it would be sufficient for Mr. Hazard to exhibit his commission, together with a French translation of it, to the Count, but he observed that it would be necessary for me to address a note to him giving him notice of it, upon which the *exequatur* would be issued, not from the Chancery, but from the Department of Foreign Affairs, and it must be, when delivered, carried to the Senate to be registered. I wrote the Count that same day, and as the want of a consul at Archangel is most sensibly felt by the multitudes of Americans who have already crowded into that port, I suggested the hope that the forms of recognition might be abridged as much as possible to give the gentleman appointed the means of rendering to his countrymen there the official services of which they stand so much in need. I have not received the Count's answer. But as there is nothing in nature so callous to the spur as official routine, I suppose Mr. Hazard's recognition will proceed with exactly the same pace as if I had said nothing about it.

This was the first occasion upon which the Count had ever marked a special discrimination between his functions as Chancellor, and those as Minister of Foreign Affairs; I

[1] Adams, *Memoirs*, July 25, 1811.

remarked it the more particularly, because the plan has for some months been in agitation of removing him from the Foreign Department by accumulating his dignities and perhaps his occupations as Chancellor. *They call it going out by a good door. But if the peace can be kept with France, the Count has neither inclination nor occasion to quit the office of Foreign Affairs, an office less elevated, but far otherwise (more) efficient than that of Chancellor. If the rupture with France comes he must inevitably withdraw from the same Department, and would doubtless himself be glad to have a ladder provided by which he might ascend to a more serene and tranquil station. I hear that he has received a letter from the Duke de Bassano, written by command of the Emperor Napoleon, expressing the regret that* he *had felt on learning that the Count had intimated a disposition to retirement and the earnest wish that he would continue in office, as that event must have the most essential tendency to the preservation of peace upon the Continent. Since then the Emperor Alexander himself has signified his intentions to keep the Count in the Foreign Office, and the Count has not concealed his own intention to remain. All this I learn from persons usually well informed, and it may all be true. The project which was in discussion before the Imperial Council sleeps perhaps upon the files. But it may be taken up again, if the rupture with France should ensue.*[1]

The Chancellor told me that they were going to remove Count Pahlen from the United States, but that another person would be sent there to replace him. He has accepted the offer of the mission to Brazil, which was made him some months since, and the commission will be sent out to him immediately.[2] But he has stipulated that he should not be required to stay longer than two years, and that within that

[1] Cypher.

[2] On July 30 Adams received notice of the appointment of André Daschkoff.

time he should be provided with some place nearer home. To this condition Count Romanzoff said the Emperor had assented; that Count Pahlen would have the peculiar fortune of commencing the diplomatic relations on the part of Russia with both parts of the American hemisphere, and if still another sovereign power should arise in that quarter of the globe, he would probably be accredited there too. This allusion was undoubtedly to the existing state of the countries which have been Spanish colonies in South America; but to whom I do not imagine it is probable that Russia will send a minister within two years. He added that he was convinced Count Pahlen would in future thank him for having thus given him the opportunity of becoming acquainted so advantageously with both the American continents; it must be far preferable to a mission at Stuttgart or at Cassel, which a Russian might visit and which many Russians did visit, as well without a diplomatic mission as with one. I said I hoped that at least Count Pahlen would have reason to recollect with pleasure his residence with us. All his letters, he replied, were expressive of the strongest satisfaction with our country.

The state of our relations with England is a subject upon which the Chancellor never fails to make inquiries, in conversing with me. I was now as little informed concerning it as himself. The *affair* between the frigate *President* and the *Little Belt* had been known here these ten days. The Count said he had seen the English gazettes down to the 28th of June and this event had occasioned there great agitation in the public mind. The report of Captain Bingham had not been received, but the ministerial papers already asserted as unquestionable that the first fire came from the American frigate. A squadron under the command of Sir Joseph York was fitting out to sail for America. But it

appeared the whole struggle for Spain and Portugal, was to be gone over again. Lord Wellington had been obliged to raise the siege of Badajos, and another general action was expected. This the Count said was a very different result from what had been lately and very generally expected. It had been thought that the issue of the late campaign had given the English, if not undisputed possession, at least a decisive preponderancy in Spain. Now it appeared that all was to be fought for again. I observed that the Emperor Napoleon and his Minister of the Interior had both declared that France would persevere in this struggle, but that it would require large reënforcements to the French armies. He said that such reënforcements had been sent both from Toulon and Marseilles, and also, as he was informed by the Ambassador Prince Kurakin, from Paris.

The victory of the Russian army commanded by General Kutuzoff, for which the Te Deum was celebrated last Sunday in the imperial chapel, was obtained over the Grand Vizier in person at the head, as the Russian official account asserts, of sixty thousand men. The Russian force engaged, by the same account, was less than twenty thousand. They were attacked in their entrenched camp before Rustchuk, and not only repulsed the Turks with great slaughter, but pursued them six or seven miles in their retreat. The Russian loss is stated to be about five hundred men killed and wounded. It was on the 22nd of June. *In all these actions with the Turks, there is a rumor in circulation differing materially from the official report. It is said that the victory was not so complete, nor gained with so little loss as the gazettes announce. In evidence of this it is alleged that General Kutuzoff, since the action, has abandoned his entrenched camp, Bas Rustchuk, and that place itself, and with his whole army has withdrawn to the left banks of the Danube. It has been*

*found necessary to send back to the army two divisions of thirty thousand men which had been drawn to form the line on the borders of Poland. The Turks have the offensive, and the hopes of peace have nearly vanished.*[1] I am with great respect etc.

## TO ABIGAIL ADAMS

ST. PETERSBURG, 29 July, 1811.

MY DEAR MOTHER:

. . . . . .

The death of my worthy and respected friends, Judge Dana[2] and Mr. Emerson,[3] has given me great concern, and the state of health in which my brother's own letters and yours represent him occasion deep anxiety. Mr. Dana had a harshness of temper, arising from a constitutional nervous irritability, and the perpetual terrors of that disease which finally proved fatal to him, and had hung over him nearly five and twenty years. I saw him under the operation of his first paralytic attack, and then watched one night with him at his bedside. It was in the spring of 1787, while I was a student at college. I had then no expectation that he would ever recover from it, nor had he himself, nor his family nor his physician. He never did recover from it entirely, for although he retained for twenty years afterwards the powers of his mind to a surprising and, I believe after such an attack, to an unexampled degree, yet his nervous system was so shattered, and his fears of a relapse so incessant, that it embittered all the remnant of his days. This state of habitual distemper sharpened the natural asperities

[1] Cypher.

[2] Francis Dana died April 25, 1811.

[3] William Emerson died May 12, 1811.

of his disposition, narrowed the means of his intercourse with society, and confined him in a great measure to his family relations. He was always very highly respected as a judge, and until the last moment when he held that station, I believe his learning and his judgment remained unimpaired. His integrity was never questioned. He had been a distinguished patriot of our revolution, an enlightened and upright judge, a virtuous citizen and excellent father of a family; but of all the men whom I ever knew, moving in so enlarged a sphere he had the fewest *friends*. I was therefore not surprised to learn with how little public notice his decease had been attended.[1] Had I been at Boston assuredly the ordinary tribute usual to the memory of the obscurest citizens should not have been denied to him. But I have had intimations for several years that he was engaged in a manner which will leave a durable memorial of himself. Mrs. Warren's *Aspasian* remarks upon his mission to Russia,[2] which the good woman borrowed from the political Adonises of our revolutionary age, and which she never asked herself whether they were fit for the chastity of a female historian to retail, had affected the feelings of Judge Dana, as it was natural they should, and I have some reason to believe that

[1] "Judge Dana died, and his funeral is attended by his relations, his pall bearers, and a few individuals. Not a word of notice taken of a man who had sustained various important offices, and who for many years was Chief Justice of the State; who discharged the duties of his office as an honest, upright and learned judge; who was a religious man; as husband and parent, fond, affectionate and tender; as a public man, without a stain. Yet not one solitary paragraph in a newspaper, to say more than upon such a day he died! This would not have been, if you had been here. It has really hurt me for his family. But he was not a party man; he had not popular talents, nor, what Lord Chesterfield calls suavity of manners, which attract more forcibly, than sound sense and learning." *Abigail Adams to John Quincy Adams*, May 28, 1811. Ms.

[2] Warren, *History of the Rise, Progress and Termination of the American Revolution*, II. 302.

he was preparing for publication, either memoirs of his own life, or some historical work relative to the American revolution in which he meant to treat that *blushless* and *ridiculous* comment of his person as it deserved.

Mr. Emerson had been one of my college acquaintances, but as he was there my junior by two years I had never had much intimacy with him, until my last return to the United States. I found him settled pastor of the church, where I had been accustomed to attend at the public ministrations of his predecessor, Dr. Clarke. I then became associated with him in various pursuits of science, a member of his congregation and a joint member with him of a social weekly club. He was always an amiable and respectable man, and he was one of the very few friends who looked at me with unaltered eye, after the Junto had let loose their pack upon me, and the legislature of *Patriotic Proceedings* had dismissed me. I felt a strong attachment to him and lament his loss. I had always regretted that after the severe illness which he had three years ago, he persisted in resuming his professional labors, from which his physicians warned him of the inevitable consequence. But his motives were obligations of the highest duty, which even when taxable with imprudence can never cease to be respectable. I hope his family has not been left destitute, and that his children will have from his friends whatever assistance they may need.

. . . . . .

## TO THOMAS BOYLSTON ADAMS

ST. PETERSBURG, 31 July, 1811.

MY DEAR BROTHER:

. . . . . .

A letter of 28 May from my mother would in some sort have tranquillized my mind in respect to you, if it had not at the same time alarmed me by mentioning the severe and dangerous accident which you had met with by a fall from your horse. She says that you intended to write me by the same opportunity, and as I have not received the letter, I am afraid that it was because you found yourself unable to write. But in general she observes that your health had improved by your excursion to the district of Maine, and I rejoice to find in Governor Gerry's speech to the Legislature, that your mission with your colleagues [1] had been satisfactory and successful. By the same gazette, too, which we have received to 4 June, I learn your appointment as a member of the Council, an event upon which I cannot congratulate you as being likely to contribute to your tranquillity. The time is apparently coming when the temper and character of the American people will be tried by a test to which, since the war of our revolution, they have been strangers. And unfortunately, the unparalleled prosperity which for more than a quarter of a century they have enjoyed has been constantly unfitting them from year to year for the reverse of fortune, which they now have to encounter. The school of affliction is, however, as necessary to form the moral character of nations as of individuals. I hope that ours will be purified by it. The prospect of a war with England has

[1] The Attorney General [Perez Morton] and John Smith of Springfield. The object was to settle land claims in Maine.

been so long approaching us, that we ought to have been better prepared for it than we are. It was to prevent this war, which I believed altogether otherwise unavoidable, that I assented to and voted for the embargo, when a member of the Senate. I hoped it would have saved us from the war. I have ever been convinced, and now believe more firmly than ever, that it did save us from the war for that time, and postponed it for four years. The same causes which would have produced it then are producing it now, and according to all appearance, if anything can possibly save us from it again it will be another embargo.

Whether our government will have the time, or the inclination, or the resolution, to resort to this expedient again, I do not know. From the accounts received here from England, since the news of the rencounter between the *President* frigate and the *Little Belt*, measures appear to have been adopted for the express purpose of "humbling the Yankees," and a squadron of five ships of the line, to be followed it is said by a regiment of troops, has sailed for America with sealed orders to be opened west of Scilly. Their object will doubtless be known to you long before you receive this letter. Whether it be of mere menace or direct hostility, I trust the spirit of my country will prove true to itself. But it opens in either case a prospect before [us], at least as formidable as that of 1775 and 1776 was to our fathers.

You tell me that you sent me a letter, which you had written me, expressing perhaps too freely your opinions of certain late measures of our government. Perhaps I ought to have burnt two letters which I wrote you expressing my opinions with regard to the non-intercourse or non-importation act of the last session of Congress. I do sincerely respect and honor the motives, and I fully approve the spirit of

those by whom it was passed. They had given a pledge by the act of the former session, which they thought they were bound to redeem, and they might justly expect that France would [illegible] effect her engagements on her part, so [illegible] and [illegible] stated by the Duke de Cadore. [illegible] was [illegible] that France had already violated her [illegible] engagements in a manner which absolved us from all [illegible] by the act of the former session, and [illegible] that the tendency of the new act [illegible] a war with England. The new [illegible] and [illegible] which the [illegible] of [illegible] with regard to the facts, [illegible] the danger, and seems to render the [illegible]

[illegible] that the [illegible] and the [illegible] will [illegible] a dignity and [illegible]

[illegible]

This state of affairs is also calculated to turn back my reflections upon myself. It has led me to review my own public conduct in past times, and to consider my prospects and my duties for the future. You will already see that I find in it an additional justification to my own mind for the part I took in relation to our foreign affairs, during the last session of Congress in which I held a seat in the Senate. My principle was one which no result of events could possibly shake. But in respect to *policy*, I always considered the embargo as justifiable on no other ground, than that its only alternative was war. This opinion from the necessity of the thing was conjectural. It is even now not demonstrable that war would have followed without it; but if war comes from the same operative causes as I believed would have produced it then, I shall certainly consider my reasoning at that time as more completely sanctioned by the events than I could if it should not ensue.

Since my residence in Russia our relations both with France and England have taken a variety of turns, and new incidents affecting them have occurred, but in which it has not been my duty to take any part. I have of course none of the responsibility connected with them upon me. I have had nothing *English* to guard against but forgery. My most difficult and important labors have been to struggle against another influence. But let me tell you an anecdote. In the month of February last I heard that there was an American vessel, somewhere in the river Elbe going shortly with a special permission from the French government to Boston. Thinking this might be a good opportunity to write a *private* letter or two, (I took special care not to send by that way any public ones,) I wrote you on the 5th of March, No. 12, and inclosed it together with a duplicate of No. 11, under a cover directed to my father, and sent it by

post to Mr. Forbes at Hamburg, with a request that he would forward it by the first safe opportunity to the United States.

On the 26th of March Mr. Forbes wrote me that he had received my letters, and should send the inclosures by the ship *Packet*, Captain Hinkley, which was to sail for Boston in a very few days. I congratulated myself on having thus found one more chance of conveyance for my winter letters, and was indulging the hope that my number twelve had reached you at least in June, until about ten days since I received a subsequent letter from Mr. Forbes, informing me that a few days previous to the departure of Captain Hinkley, at 7 o'clock in the morning, his bedchamber was entered by order of the police, and all his letters amounting to seven or eight were taken from him, and that my letter directed to my father was among them. Mr. Forbes made immediately a written application for the restoration of my letter. He was referred from the police to the post office, and from the post office to the police, but never obtained the letter.

You may perhaps have thought me particularly cautious of writing you and my other friends at Quincy upon topics of political interest, and if you receive my letters Nos. 11 and 12, you may wonder what motives there could be, not for breaking them open, but for eluding the return of them. And I trust you will perceive that I have had sufficient reason for great reserve in writing politics, and that you will find some excuse for letters on subjects which might be thought too trifling for a man of my years and gravity.

To resume the thread of my reflections, if we have a war with England I may perhaps find it difficult to get home, but I suppose a passport for myself and family would be obtainable. I am now on a new account glad that I had a

substantial reason for declining the seat on the bench. It is now (setting aside all my old objections) one of the last places that I could be willing to hold. I need not enlarge. For myself, for my family, the private station to which I expect to return has, besides all its other advantages, an attraction of safety from the storm, to which I look with comfort and hope. Do not understand me, however, as intending to shrink from any station which my country through her constitutional organs may assign to me. I owe her too much to decline any post of danger to which she may ever think fit to call me. Hitherto I thank her equally for what she has given, for what she has offered, and for what she has overlooked. I shall be equally grateful, if she overlooks me again. . . .

## TO THE SECRETARY OF STATE

No. 61. [JAMES MONROE]

ST. PETERSBURG, 2 August, 1811.

SIR:

I have the honor to enclose copies of my note to the Chancellor, Count Romanzoff, respecting the recognition of Mr. Hazard, as Consul of the United States at Archangel, and of the Chancellor's answer. In my last letter I intimated to you an apprehension that owing to the delays incident to the routine of official forms, it would be some time before Mr. Hazard could enter upon the exercise of his functions. From Count Romanzoff's answer to my note you will perceive that by a special order of the Emperor to the military governor of Archangel, the ordinary delays which arise from the usage of transmitting to the Senate and of waiting for

their publication of the imperial ukaze, will in this case be altogether avoided. I am the more sensible to this mark of the Emperor's attention to the interests of our commerce, because it was unexpected. Before the arrival of Mr. Hazard's commission, Mr. Harris, under his authority as consul general, had appointed Mr. Francis Dana, vice consul of the United States at that port. He had been recognized by the Emperor, and the ukaze had been registered by the Senate. But it had not been *published;* and at Mr. Harris's request I had spoken to the Chancellor to urge the publication necessary to enable Mr. Dana to exercise his functions. The Count had then told me that the publication of all the imperial ukazes was made in regular course by the Senate, and he had expressed doubts whether it would be in his power to accelerate its motion. This circumstance had been my inducement for expressing in my note to the Count, concerning Mr. Hazard, my wish that he might be effectually acknowledged without any delay which could be prevented; and it led me at the same time to suggest the doubt with regard to the success of my application, contained in my last letter. It was in this instance, as I have found it in several others, from the personal good will of the Emperor that the favor was obtained, which it was not in the power of his Minister to grant.

From a passage in my letter of 22 ult., you will recollect that the struggle of French influence for the exclusion of all American commerce from the Russian ports has for the present been abandoned. *The present ambassador, on his first arrival here, was less reserved and cautious in his conversations on subjects than his predecessor, the Duke de Vicence. I am persuaded that he upon his return to France convinced his government that this was a point upon which Russia would not yield, and that it would be in vain to urge her any more upon it.*

*Since the speech of 24th March to the Council of Commerce, the Emperor Napoleon has had time for further reflection, and I consider his declaration, that in regard to the continental system he was satisfied with the conduct of Russia, as indicating the determination to waive that point of controversy, at least for the present.*[1] But the other objects of difference between the two empires not only remain unadjusted but are increasing in asperity and aggravation. I am not able to this day to assure you with undoubting confidence that the peace will continue through the present year. France has often commenced her military operations in the north of Europe during the months of September and October, nor will it be safe to affirm, until these months are past, that she will not now repeat the example. A new point of discussion has recently occurred which is of a character calculated to hasten the crisis. The Russian government some time since issued a circular notification that the ports of Anatolia upon the Black Sea were in a state of blockade. The Russian squadron there have lately taken eight Greek ships laden with firearms and other articles of contraband of war, but sailing under the French flag and furnished with papers from the French legation at Constantinople. The Chancellor has within a few days addressed to the French ambassador a long note couched in very strong language on this subject. The ambassador alleges that the vessels were bound to ports within the Russian dominions. But the Russian forces needed no supplies of warlike stores from that quarter, and the destination of the ships was at all events to a place in the vicinity of the Georgians and other tribes of Mount Caucasus, who are in a state of fermentation and revolt against the Russian authority. This incident, though intended to be kept secret, has occasioned within the last week a renewed

[1] Cypher.

rumor of war in this city, and the most recent communications from France are not of a nature to remove the alarm. Another scene in the horrible tragedy of Spain and Portugal has displayed itself, and the French arms appear to have recovered their preponderancy on the borders of Portugal, and to have established it in Catalonia, nearly at the same moment. These successes have changed the determination which the Emperor Napoleon had taken to go there in person, which I mentioned to you in one of my late letters, and leave him at liberty to take any other course which he may deem advisable.

*I believe that henceforth we shall have little reason to dread the operation of any French influence against our trade with Russia that can be exercised here. The day of mutual accommodations and deferences between the two Empires is irretrievably past. That of the compliances on the part of Russia is also gone. At this moment Russia has a confidence in her strength and state of preparation which, since the peace of Tilsit, she has never felt before, and between her and France there is probably not in a single point of general politics a conformity of views or of interests. The American commerce has certainly not been in the idea of either party the most important object upon which they have clashed, but until very lately it has been one of deep interest to both. It cannot be doubted but that the interest of Russia herself formed the decisive motives to that resistance which this government has maintained against the pretensions of France, and which Count Romanzoff termed* their obstinate *attachment to the United States. I am however sincerely persuaded that a personal sentiment of the Emperor Alexander, a sentiment resulting from the natural generosity and magnanimity of his character, did contribute, together with the interests of his Empire, to that cool and inflexible resolution which he did preserve and in which he settled, after long and*

*mature deliberation. This sentiment may justly be termed attachment to the United States, and I wish that their government may be sensible of it. On this occasion, as my letter may probably reach you about the time when Congress will convene, I ask the permission to suggest the idea that some notice in general terms by the President, in his message at the opening of the session, of the manner in which Russia has been distinguished by her regard to our rights and some complimentary expressions with reference personally to the Emperor might have a favorable effect, not only as manifesting a suitable return to such a disposition, but as calculated to confirm it, when it may be liable to the opposition of an influence still more formidable than that of France.*[1]

Count Romanzoff has also addressed me another note containing the information that his Imperial Majesty has been pleased to appoint Mr. Daschkoff, his envoy extraordinary and minister plenipotentiary to the United States, in the place of Count Pahlen, whom he destines to his mission to Brazil. The motives assigned for the appointment of Mr. Daschkoff are conformable to the same amicable disposition which has invariably been manifested by the Emperor to the United States. I enclose a copy of the Count's note and of my answer. I am with sincere respect, etc.

[1] Cypher. The President's message merely stated that relations "with Russia are on the best footing of friendship."

## TO THE SECRETARY OF STATE

No. 62. [JAMES MONROE]

ST. PETERSBURG, 9 August, 1811.

SIR:

Soon after my arrival in this country, in conformity to instructions which I had received from the Secretary of State, I addressed an official note to the Chancellor Count Romanzoff concerning two American vessels which had been captured, one by a Russian privateer, and the other by a frigate in the fleet of Admiral Siniavin, while cruising in the Mediterranean. I enclosed a copy of my note in my letter of 4 December, 1809, to your predecessor.

Having lately received a letter from Mr. Thorndike, the owner of one of the vessels in question, requesting me to call the attention of the Russian government to this subject, I had last Tuesday the 6th instant an interview with Count Romanzoff, in which I reminded him of it. He said that my note had been referred to the Minister of the Marine, from whom no report in relation to it had been made, which was the reason why no answer had yet been made to me. But he took a minute of the date of my note, and promised me that the answer should not be much longer delayed.

*With respect to the discussion of articles for a commercial treaty I told the Count that*[1] the extraordinary uncertainty of the present state of political affairs, as well as the uncertainty of my own situation here, not knowing what determination the President of the United States had taken, or might ultimately take, in regard to the mission at this Court, had deterred me from making further communications to

[1] Cypher.

him, in addition to that which I had verbally made him in our conference on the 4th of June. *He said that while this extreme uncertainty continued there could be no use in undertaking any such discussion. The determination of the Russian government still was to shew all possible favor and encouragement to the American commerce, but to provide for the day as it passed out of our hands was all that the nature of things now admitted of. From hour to hour was it possible to say that there would be any such commerce to favor? A war between the United States and England must obviously destroy it totally. Such a war now appeared to him altogether unavoidable, and he was sincerely sorry for it. He regretted it particularly as it indicated*[1] that the flames of war instead of abating, as he most ardently wished, were to be still extended. And when was it to end? What was my opinion? Did I think there was any prospect of a peace? I asked him whether he meant a general peace? He said yes; or at least a peace between France and England. That, I observed, was in substance the same thing, that peace would make all others easy; but I must confess that never appeared to me more remote than at this moment. *He said that greatly to his affliction he perfectly agreed with me in this opinion.*[1] The conversation now becoming altogether general, rambled without much coherency over the scene of passing events, and was too long and in many respects of too little interest to be worth detailing minutely to you.

*I observed that besides the state of affairs between the United States and England which, with him, I believed and deeply lamented could terminate no otherwise than in war, the state of affairs and the discussions which had arisen between Russia and France* (at least as they were considered and represented in the public opinion) *threatened at least as much the*

[1] Cypher.

*prolongation of the war. It was the first time I had thought proper to speak to him on this subject, and the occasion so naturally introduced it, that there would have been rather an affectation than the substance of delicacy in avoiding it. He said that as to the relations between Russia and France there was doubtless much public discourse, for which there was no foundation; but thus much he could say to me, that if the whole budget were turned inside out, and exposed to the view of the public, it would by no means tend to weaken the same conclusions which were drawn from what was known, or to brighten the prospect of peace.*

*He told me that the French Ambassador had just been with him. He had received a courier the day before, who had brought him an account of the dissolution of the Ecclesiastical Council at Paris, and the imprisonment of three of the bishops. He was surprised at this symptom of resistance to the will of the Emperor Napoleon, for he was satisfied, from his own personal observation,*[1] that there was very little attachment to religion in France. It was not as it had been thirty or forty years before a fashion of infidelity, but a profound indifference, or rather an almost universal absence of all religious ideas. And it was not particularly confined to France. It seemed to extend to the Roman Catholics all over Europe. Considering what the Pope was, in the principle of the Roman Catholics, how, but from this general indifference, could it be accounted for that no mark of interest or of sensibility had been manifested from any part of the Catholic world to the situation of the Pope. Yet the Catholics formed the great mass of population in several important European states. To instance only *Austria. I suggested that the Austrian government, from motives of policy, might perhaps restrain the expression of such sentiments, though*

[1] Cypher.

*otherwise they might be entertained: but he replied that the sentiment to which he alluded was precisely of a nature which the policy of the government could not control. 'Were it felt, it would burst through all such restraint; but he was not aware that any had been used. Here he was at least sure that none had. There were provinces of the Russian empire inhabited almost entirely by Catholics. They were not only unrestrained in regard to their religious sentiments, but the Emperor Napoleon well knew—he had been explicitly informed long ago—that in case of any difference between him and the Pope, by which the consciences of that class of the Russian subjects might be affected, the Russian government would not side with him against them.*

*The approaches to hostility may perhaps be indicated more accurately by gradations of temper than by the particular subjects in discussion between the parties. How serious the differences in altercation between the two Empires appear to this government you will easily infer from this conversation, when you recollect that Count Romanzoff is the man of the Russian dominions most deeply pledged and most strongly attached to the French alliance. The same inference may be drawn from language very recently held by the Emperor Alexander himself. The Sunday before last Count Lüxburg, the Bavarian chargé d'affaires, had a private audience to take leave of his Majesty. The Emperor, after charging him with his compliments to the King of Bavaria, said: "I hope the peace of the north of Europe will not be disturbed. There is a great deal of talk abroad among the public, but all that signifies nothing. For what purpose should there be war? It is time that the world should be allowed a little tranquillity. I suppose it is not expected to make conquests* here. *What end could that answer? As for the rest, we are ready* (Au reste, nous sommes prêt)." *I have these particulars from Count Lüxburg himself, who was much*

*surprised, and not a little embarrassed at this unexpected discourse. The King of Bavaria is a member of the Rhenish confederation.*

*There is a rumor in circulation that the king of Prussia has acceded, or rather been admitted to that league. It is reported to me from sources which induce me now to notice it, but not from such as I consider indisputably authentic. It is obvious that in the event of war between France and Russia, Prussia must rely on a protector, and as clear that her own policy would give the preference to France.*[1] I am with great respect, etc.

## TO GEORGE WILLIAM ERVING

ST. PETERSBURG, 13 August, 1811.

DEAR SIR:

. . . . . .

I congratulate you cordially upon the success which has hitherto attended your "*special mission.*" It is felt and acknowledged by the Americans, who have found their way here so much more easily since your arrival than they could before. I hope it will terminate as much to your satisfaction as you could anticipate. It is much to be regretted that the Danish government still refuses to listen to reason with regard to the convoy cases. If however the British do not renew the blockade of the Sound, there will be no convoy cases after this; and if Denmark who takes a toll will perform her corresponding part of keeping the passage free, none of our countrymen will ever resort to a British protection to effect it.

That the *alliance* of which you speak will be defeated, if they set up a party of their own, I firmly believe with you.

[1] Cypher.

I had heard something of it before I received your letter, but I confess to you when I heard *such* names as candidates for the next Presidency, I thought those who told me that such would be the case were joking. I should even now not believe it possible, had I not seen upon what foundation Aaron Burr seriously undertook to make himself an Emperor, and how much newspaper eloquence was wasted before the last election, to make a candidate, whose chance of success was no better than that of the allies will be at the next. The rumor of Mr. Randolph's appointment to England was at least premature, and I suppose naturally sprung from Mr. Monroe's accession to the Department of State. After what has happened I think we shall not soon have an envoy of any kind at the Court of St. James, but when we do, I should be glad to see there a man of Mr. Randolph's spirit, with a little more discretion of conduct, and much more delicacy of language and deportment. I have some curiosity to see what his line of politics will be, since his friend [1] has become a member of the administration. You do not comprehend the policy of the Perceval-Wellesley ministry in the order to encourage a trade between France and England in French ships manned by French seamen. Will you allow me to suggest *my* solution of the problem? It is, that the Perceval-Wellesley tribe, composing alas! too large a part of their nation, hate a Frenchman more than they do anything on this side the infernal regions, excepting a *Yankee*. The reason is because in their hatred of France their pride is gratified as by the consciousness of struggling against superior power—they think the strife glorious. Their hatred of America is mingled with the mortification of having in her an enemy whom they wish to despise, and cannot. As a commercial rival they dread America much more than France.

[1] Monroe. See Henry Adams, *History*, V. 367.

I think as you do, that they will force America into a war against them, though they might see as clearly as you and I do, that in this policy they make themselves the tool of Bonaparte.

The difficulties between France and Russia are not smoothed over, and Oldenburg is but one among many of their causes. There has been ever since the peace of Tilsit a sort of *instinct* in the public opinion that another war between the two empires must soon come. Hence at the first moment when it was known there was a variance in their cabinets, the speculative politicians made a somerset over all the intermediate gradations, and at the first word of discussion, proclaimed the war in which it may terminate. The parties have not yet come to avow their altercations in public, but they are acquiring asperity and growing in number. The late ambassador on his return hence to Paris administered a cooling and quieting potion, which operated remarkably well for a time, and that was the time when you must have heard that the cure was effected. But there has been since then another paroxysm, which I hope will not end in a convulsion before winter. And then there will be time gained to try new and more durable pacific expedients. I am etc.

## TO THE SECRETARY OF STATE

No. 63. [JAMES MONROE]

ST. PETERSBURG, 16 August, 1811.

SIR:

The state of affairs between Russia and France still continues to be critical. The negotiations between the parties have lately acquired a degree of activity, but with regard to their particulars there is an unusual secrecy affected on both sides. The rumor that the king of Prussia has acceded to the confederation of the Rhine is still maintained, but the fact is known to none of the ministers from the princes of that confederation at this court. The kings of Saxony, Bavaria, Würtemburg, and Westphalia have ministers here with the rank of envoy and minister plenipotentiary. So has the king of Prussia. Not one of them is informed whether the Autumn will pass in peace, *and their courts are as ignorant of what is to happen as themselves.*[1]

The following article, translated from the St. Petersburg gazette of this day, was probably inserted for the purpose of quieting a new alarm, which during the last fortnight has existed here, that the war was on the point of breaking out.

From the Rhine, 28 June, they write as follows: The rumors of the possibility of a new war upon the continent had indeed never obtained credit with persons of penetration, because there was not a single fact to support them, but even these rumors have now entirely ceased to be heard. Every one is convinced that the continental peace is more firmly established than ever, and Europe has well grounded hopes of enjoying a long repose, which after so many bloody efforts it so truly needs. The termination of the

[1] Cypher.

disturbances in Spain and the subjugation of its neighboring Portugal, together with the expulsion of the English from the Pyrenean peninsula appear now to be the principal objects of the French government. In order the more speedily to accomplish this end, it is understood that orders have been dispatched to a very considerable number of troops distributed in the interior of the empire to march immediately for Spain. It is said that even some of the columns which had previously been ordered to the Rhine, have also had their destination altered, and taken the same direction. New convoys of artillery and of warlike stores of all kinds are in the like manner taking the road to Spain. The Berne gazette contradicts the report that the French troops have quitted the canton of Tessin.

The date of this article is prior to the most recent rumors of war, but its publication here in a sort of official gazette at this time is the strongest indication which has yet occurred that the peace will survive the present year. It is probable that France has expostulated, and perhaps warmly, against the extraordinary number of troops on the Polish frontier, with intimations that unless part of those forces should be removed, her own armaments in the same quarter must be proportioned to them. That such immense preparations on the borders of a friend were the more strongly calculated to excite uneasiness at a time when there was an enemy, against whom Russia had so recently shewn a spirit so highly animated, to employ them. In fine that France considered it as indispensable that Russia should assume in that quarter an attitude less menacing. To these suggestions it has been natural to answer that France herself must set the example and suspend her counter-armaments. Intead of two divisions as mentioned in my letter of 28 July I now hear that double that number, or sixty thousand men, have been ordered to join again the Turkish army from which

they had been detached; and as this has been thus far in compliance with the requisitions of France, it may be deemed proper to turn the attention of the public to the like compliance on her part.

*It is certain that the French Ambassador now speaks more confidently of the preservation of peace than he did last week. He* [1] gave yesterday a great entertainment on the occasion of the Emperor Napoleon's birthday, which was attended by the Chancellor and principal ministers and crown officers of this empire.[2]

*The Ambassador, whom I frequently see, by no means accords with the Russian government respecting the relations between the United States and Britain. I have often reported to you the earnestness with which it is here desired that our peace with England may be preserved. You will see by my last conversation with the Chancellor that he expressed this sentiment without reserve. The Ambassador is equally candid and explicit in his wishes and his hopes, that it will come to a war. I believe that he and his government estimate too highly the advantage to them of this war; but that it will be advantageous to them is so obvious that it is surprising it should not be perceived by a British ministry.*[3]

Among the vessels under the American flag which have arrived within a few weeks at Cronstadt was one called the *Angerona*, Captain John T. Marks. She had been chartered in London to come here in ballast and take a cargo. Immediately after her arrival I received an intimation that she came with forged papers, of which I gave notice to Mr. Harris, that he might be prepared for the detection of the fraud when the papers should be put into his hands. They passed through the examination of the Neutral Commission, where after some difficulty they were admitted as genuine.

[1] Cypher. [2] Adams, *Memoirs*, August 15, 1811. [3] Cypher.

Just at the time when they were to be sent to Mr. Harris, Captain Marks informed him that he had lost them from his pocketbook at Cronstadt, together with some other valuable papers, and he advertised them offering a handsome reward to any person who should find them, but without effect. Captain Marks then came to me, requesting my assistance to obtain for him a document to serve him as a substitute for genuine American papers instead of those he alleged to have lost. I could give him no such assistance. I explicitly stated to him that I had reason to believe that he came with forged papers. He said if they were, it was not to his knowledge, that he had received them from Mr. Maury at Liverpool, and that they had passed through the hands of Mr. Lyman at London. I referred him to Mr. Harris, who since told me that he should take bonds equal to the value of the vessel, to be forfeited unless proof should hereafter be produced by Captain Marks that his papers were genuine. It may be observed on this occasion that *now* all difficulties here with regard to the papers of vessels coming in ballast are merely formal, or raised for the benefit of having them removed. It is a matter of indifference where or to whom the vessel belong, if she brings no cargo and comes to take one of Russian produce or manufactures away. It is however so far from being indifferent to us, that I should regret the success in a single instance here, of the London forgeries of ships-papers attempted to be passed off for American registers. If peace and *any* commerce should be left us, it would deserve to be considered, whether some further legislative provisions might not be expedient, to secure the fair and authentic papers from the too close resemblance of the counterfeits. I am very respectfully etc.

P. S. I take the liberty to enclose a letter to the President of the United States, and two others.

## TO JOHN ADAMS

St. Petersburg, 20 August, 1811.

My Dear Sir:

. . . . . .

As I declined the seat upon the bench upon the foresight of this state of things, I conclude that another judge will be appointed during the next session of the United States Senate. The place here will remain to be disposed of at the pleasure of the President. I foresee no insuperable impediment to my return home the next summer, if he deems my recall to be still expedient. If at any time I could have harbored an ambition or desire to go elsewhere, the state of affairs in the only places where I could be transferred is sufficient to damp a fiercer flame than I ever felt. Among the good natured friends that I have both in Europe and America, who speculate and foretell upon persons and appointments, there have been enough to give me notice of destinations which might have been assigned to me. I assure you in the sincerity of my heart that I have never had an intimation of these possibilities without serious concern lest they should prove true, and that I have felt a real satisfaction at finding the lot cast upon others, which it was supposed by many, hoped by a few, and feared perhaps by more than either, might fall to me. In justice to my own feelings I ought to tell you, to whom my whole soul is as open as to itself, that I never will shrink from any post which the constitutional organs of my country shall assign to me, for any difficulty or danger with which it may be beset. But I may be allowed to feel a satisfaction when I see myself passed by, in the assignment of a place where I know there is nothing but difficulty and danger to be ex-

pected. You have in some of your letters suggested the idea that the motives of some of those whose suffrages concurred to the appointment last offered me, were neither pure nor friendly to me. Of those which actuated the President I am as sure as if they were in my own heart. I know they were both honest and kind to me. Among the Senators there were certainly two, whom no personal regard for me would have withheld from recording their votes against me, and who not having done it, must have been actuated by motives of a different kind. If it were in my nature to suspect dishonest intentions in conduct apparently fair, my own interest in this case would lead me to more favorable conclusions. It is more honorable to myself as well as to the voters, to believe that they gave their assent to the nomination from the conviction that I was well qualified for the office, than to imagine that they foresaw it would be a place where I should be stowed away from public view, or unavoidably forfeit any popularity which I might possess. These at least are motives which no one will acknowledge, and considering the unanimity of the vote in the Senate as a testimony of confidence in my integrity from political opponents as well as friends, it has been the most gratifying occurrence of my life. The office itself of a *judge* nothing could ever reconcile to my own inclinations, but with this testimony in my favor, I can return to private life, not with a prouder consciousness of my own uprightness, than when I was turned out of the Senate by my constituents, the Massachusetts legislature, but at least with a dismissal less offensive in form and more agreeable in substance.

My good friend Quincy whom, notwithstanding his great and manifold political errors, I still adhere to in heart as a friend, made last winter an eloquent, satirical and witty speech upon the ungovernable passion of Americans for

place. He seems to assume it as the basis of his whole discourse, that the desire for public office is a *crime*, and with a very magnanimous patriotism he pours forth his indignation and contempt without respect to persons, both upon friend and foe guilty of soliciting themselves, or of having relations in Congress who solicit for them, the distinctions and the profits which may be derived from public service. Mr. Quincy is not the first whom I have heard talk, as if the consummation of human virtue consisted in the aversion or disdain to hold public office. *Longe die mihi est mens.*

It is my opinion that the wish even for the honors and emoluments of public office is not in itself a culpable sentiment. That there is nothing disgraceful or despicable in avowing it, nor yet in seeking its gratification by fair and ingenuous means. Still less can I find it in my heart to despise the member of Congress, who by the same means endeavors to procure these advantages to his father, son or brother, if deserving of them; nor the father, son or brother, who by the honest influence of such a member of Congress should obtain them. In all this I see nothing despicable and nothing dangerous, but the excess to which in common with other human passions it is liable. I have too good an opinion of the social affections of Quincy himself to believe that, when his son Josiah shall have grown to manhood, his father would without reluctance see him proscribed from all public service, an outcast from all the favors of his country, because he, the father, might still be serving that country as a member of Congress.

But although there is nothing dishonorable or unjust in the pursuit of public office, I always have considered and yet consider it as a passion, which requires great moderation, self-management, and control. I never solicited any public office whatsoever for myself, nor that I recollect for any of

my relations. My own maxim has been to wait until called by the voice of my country, and to repair without hesitation to the post assigned me by that. I have in several instances indeed interfered to prevent the call, and in this single case have answered it by denial. But I have never withstood it but from solid and cogent reasons, nor, if my present station should be the last to which I may ever be destined, shall it be from any fastidious delicacy of mine to reject any office, for which I may be thought and may think myself suitably qualified.

After the multitude of high, honorable and profitable trusts which have been committed to me by my country, I should indeed deserve the reproach of unbridled ambition and of base ingratitude could I not with cheerful heart retire for the remainder of my days to private life, and see her henceforth distribute to others of her children those favors of which she has hitherto been so lavish to me. And surely there never could be a time when for the peace and tranquillity of my own life, or for the future prospects of my children, I could withdraw from the responsibilities of the approaching events with more comfort and satisfaction.

. . . . . .

## TO THE SECRETARY OF STATE

No. 64. [JAMES MONROE]

ST. PETERSBURG, 23 August, 1811.

SIR:

The day before yesterday I received from Mr. Erving a letter, dated the 9th instant at Copenhagen, containing the information that a privateer under French colors had taken and carried into that port two American vessels, the brig

*Hero*, Blackler master, of Marblehead, bound from that place to St. Petersburg, and the brig *Radius*, B. Lander master, of Boston, and bound from Newport, also to St. Petersburg. That the papers of these two vessels had been delivered to Mr. Desangiers, the French consul and chargé d'affaires, and by him sent to Paris, and that he, Mr. Erving, had made every effort both with Mr. Desangiers, and with the Danish government, to prevent this, and to obtain that the matter should be decided in the tribunals of Denmark; but unhappily without effect. The letter adds that the privateer was going out again that night, and it was very much to be feared, intended to fill that port with our vessels upon their return from this quarter.

On receiving this letter I immediately enclosed to Mr. Harris an extract from it including all the material parts of its information, requesting him to communicate the same as expeditiously as possible to the masters of all the American vessels now at Cronstadt (amounting to nearly one hundred) and to all other persons here known to him as particularly interested in them. And I suggest to him the propriety of giving the same notice to the consular agents at Riga and at Reval.

*There may perhaps be one half of the American vessels now here who came in ballast and entered with clearances from Gothenburg: but they really come from England, where they were chartered at very high freights to come and take cargoes of hemp to carry back to England. All these came into the Baltic through the Belt, and probably under English convoy. They will return, I suppose, in like manner, and will be in no danger from this privateer or any other.*[1] Among these vessels there are at least two which came with forged papers. One the *Angerona*, Captain Marks, mentioned in my last letter, and

[1] Cypher.

the other a vessel called the *Philadelphia Packet*, Captain Thorburn, which was detected by Mr. Harris. Both of these I understand will incur the penalty of having produced false papers, Mr. Harris having found upon further examination that Marks could not give bonds to his satisfaction, to prove hereafter that the papers which he had brought and pretended to have lost were genuine. *I have heard suggestions that several of the vessels which came with cargoes are really from England and laden on English account. But of this I have not the means of obtaining certain knowledge, nor is it within my province to be informed.*[1]

But as the English have not during the present season blockaded the passage of the Sound, almost all the American vessels directly from the United States came regularly through the Sound and paid the duties at Elsineur. Having no need of English convoy they have not taken it. The appearance of this privateer may however render it indispensable for them to resort to that protection upon their return. I have been asked for an opinion by the supercargo of one vessel about to sail, and recommended to him, not indeed to take English convoy, but to keep out of reach from that privateer.

It is far from being certain what treatment our vessels will henceforth experience from the English ships in the Baltic themselves. There are daily rumors of vessels which have recently sailed from this port having been captured by the British cruisers, and the latest accounts from England mention the name of a vessel direct from New York to St. Petersburg taken and carried into Portsmouth. I have the honor to be etc.

[1] Cypher.

## TO WILLIAM EUSTIS

(*Private.*) ST. PETERSBURG, 24 August, 1811.

DEAR SIR:

I ought not at this time to have still to acknowledge the receipt of your obliging favor of 4 January last, which I received about the last of May. With regard to any information of a public nature that my correspondence could afford, I have presumed that if you remained at the head of the War Department, you would have as much of it and as frequently as would be agreeable; and in the uncertainty both as to your situation and of my own, which the changes, real and rumored, of the late times have produced, I was under a sort of necessity to wait, that I might [write] with something more of knowledge what to say and where to address you, than I have hitherto been able to possess.

I must thank you particularly for the view of the three great subjects, which were to occupy the attention of Congress at that, as you justly termed it, *eventful* session—Florida, the bank, and the non-intercourse, since modified into a non-importation. Your reflections upon all these topics appear to me strikingly just, and with regard to the course which was eventually pursued in respect to the two last, any doubts which may remain upon my mind respecting its *policy* are entirely subordinate to the conviction that nothing now remains but to support what was then done.

My situation in Europe, though almost as distant from Paris as you are at Washington, had given me the means of seeing the real course of the French policy perhaps more clearly, than it could be discerned across the Atlantic. The revocation of the decrees of Berlin and Milan I believe

to have been intentionally a fair offer to England, combined with a contingent snare to the United States. If England gave up her Orders in Council and her paper blockades, France was perfectly willing to restore neutral commerce to all its privileges, substituting the tariff as her weapon against colonial merchandise, the commerce of which she believed could yield no profit in any part of the world which would not in the nature of things centre in England. If England rejected or evaded the offer, as France foresaw she would, then she had granted substantially nothing to America, but had laid the trap which she concluded would catch us in an English war. Of the duplicity which prevailed in the French cabinet at that time I have had proofs that would give sight to the blind. If my whole public correspondence since last February has not miscarried on its passage, some of these proofs must long ere this be known to you. Even now France must studiously withhold all evidence of her having practically revoked the two decrees with regard to us, because the English government with the same cunning have declared, that upon such evidence being given they will revoke the Orders in Council. From the moment that an American vessel which entered a French port after the first of November had been seized and sequestered, I considered the pledge, given by our non-intercourse act of the former session and accepted by the counterpledge of France in the Duke de Cadore's letter of 5 August, as totally forfeited, and not only forfeited by such a gross and palpable violation of France's own engagement, but doubly so by the insulting pretence that this sequester was to satisfy herself how we should carry our promise into effect. I did, therefore, most devoutly hope that neither the non-intercourse, nor any measure specially pointed at England, would have passed at the last session; not that

England did not most richly deserve it, but because I apprehended that her mulish obstinacy, combining with our punctilious sense of our own engagements, would play the game into the hands of France, and make us both the dupes of her craft and perfidy.

After saying thus much I ought to add, that I honor and venerate the motives upon which the majority of both Houses of Congress did finally determine upon the non-importation act of the last session. That sense of a promise given, which sacrifices to its fulfilment the resentment of ill-usage and even the imminent prospect of a treacherous return, has the sincerest homage of my heart, even when I cannot reconcile its effects to the coolness of my judgment. It would seem that a policy dictated by the purest and noblest principles of honor ought to be successful. I pray that in this instance it may be so. At all events good faith, however insulted and abused, can never be dishonored, and if our country must suffer, let it be in the cause of justice. But the temper which a long series of outrages on the one part and of insulted forbearance on the other, has excited between our countrymen and the British, is daily producing new incidents of irritation and new approximations to war. The affair of the *President* and *Little Belt*, so contested on the point of fact, but which I believe was unpremeditated at least by the governments on both sides, has every appearance of hastening the crisis, and may have brought it on at the moment when I am writing. The prospect opening before our country is formidable, but not hopeless.

I have reflected perhaps more than the subject deserves upon that part of your letters which personally concerns myself, and the regret you express at my absence under the present circumstances of affairs from home. I am certainly, comparatively speaking, here in a quiet harbor, while tho-

of you who have so large a portion in the administration are threatened with the pelting of a pitiless storm. But as certainly my expedition here in the first instance was not more *pleasing* to myself than to you, I assented to the destination, but by no means desired it. I have declined the seat upon the bench, because I could not return in time to take it. I should nevertheless have been by this time more than half way home, but for circumstances in my family which will detain me another twelve months. When I do return, however, I shall have no partiality for any share in the government, and least of all for a judicial office. A sentiment of my own, long entertained, would deter me from that. Yet were it possible for the duties which a citizen owes to his country to be increased by the obligations he has received from her, I should feel mine already great beyond the possibility of adequate return, to have been yet more accumulated by the honorable appointment which was offered me.

The change which took place in one of the executive departments [1] last spring has occasioned a multitude of rumors, which have reached me either by the public newspapers or by private letters to myself and to other Americans here. There is yet a thick veil of obscurity over the real state of things to my eyes, and no immediate probability of its removal otherwise than by events. I hear and read much of discussions and schisms in the republican party, of new candidates to be started at the next presidential election, and of the federalists having the balance in their hands. All this comes from republican sources, though I am at a loss to believe one part of it, and to understand another. Most of the federalists have unfortunately placed themselves

[1] The Department of State. For the President's statement, see *Works of Madison* (Rives), II. 495.

in such a position that they *cannot* act from any other impulse than faction. But to some of them and to all of the republicans I hope the dangers of the country will have the effect which a philosophical historian says they always [have] upon virtuous nations, to cement Union, and not as in corrupted countries, to embitter discussion.

I say little to you about the state of my affairs for the reasons I have already assigned in justification for not having written to you sooner. Our commerce here has been constantly favored, in spite of every obstacle thrown in its way from external quarters. It suffers principally at this time from the consequences of that favor. The markets are crowded and overstocked. The Danes had nearly escaped their depredations. The English, though according to the Wellesley doctrine they have two if not three blockades of the Sound still subsisting because not formally revoked, have not *in fact* blockaded the passage at all this year. Our vessels, therefore, would come and go perfectly secure, but for certain pirates with French colors which at Dantzig on the coast of Holstein, and now recently at Copenhagen, take every loaded vessel that they can catch, and prey upon Americans, because they do not have recourse to the English protection. France and Russia do not agree well together, but both declare they will remain at peace for the present. The English government with no small ostentation sent a frigate here, with a few Russian prisoners that had been left in England, but she was allowed to have no other communication with the shore. The war between Russia and the Turks continues, but excepting on one occasion we have scarcely heard anything of it this year. There has been a new levy of troops in Sweden which has occasioned some popular disturbances, but they are now subdued. I am etc.

## TO GEORGE WILLIAM ERVING

ST. PETERSBURG, 26 August, 1811.

DEAR SIR:

Your favor of the 9th instant was but twelve days from its date when I received it. If it were not for these pestiferous privateers, we could correspond much more expeditiously, and more safely too by our own countrymen, who are coming and going through the Sound than by the post. But while the danger of capture by English, French and Danes hangs over them, whatever it may be advisable to write, it will be equally prudent to send by duplicates. I therefore inclose you a copy of my last, and have numbered this as I shall continue to do in future, that we may ascertain whether all those I write you are received and, if not, which of them may fail.

This open Deal pilot boat, with French colors and a crew partly of Americans issuing from Copenhagen, taking Americans within the Swedish jurisdiction, and sending their papers to Paris, has excited feelings which you will readily conceive. If the Danish government cannot assert its own jurisdiction within its own capital against a piratical Deal pilot boat, how can they possibly expect that duties should be paid them for the passage of the Sound. All the vessels directly from America which have arrived here this season, have come through the Sound, or without convoy through the Belt. If they return in a different manner, it will be only to keep out of the reach of the French privateers. Immediately on receiving your letter I had notice of its contents given to all masters of vessels and others interested here at Reval and at Riga. All those who came with convoy will no doubt return in the same manner. They are

very little concerned about French privateers or any others. I regret very much that the inflexibility of Denmark upon what she has chosen to call convoy cases and those new depredations of *soi-disant* French privateers, has tended so strongly to spread the opinion among our countrymen here, that the safest course for Americans to come or go will be by taking *real* convoy.

I forgot in my last letter, and I ought to be ashamed at having forgotten, to thank you for your very obliging offer of a bed in your house at my passage upon my return. If you should not be disappointed in your expectation of winding up by the month of December, I shall be deprived of the pleasure of meeting you there, as I have no chance of getting away from hence until next June. But unless Denmark has the grace of a nimbler speed towards justice, than is too common to belligerent spoilers, you will hardly be able to finish so soon as December. I am so far from anticipating that you will escape from your island of Seeland the next winter, that I am thinking how we shall manage our correspondence when the passages by water will be barred. I have had experience of a curiosity to be acquainted with my epistolary style at Hamburg since the reunion of the Hanseatic cities, and I wish not to give the police or the post office any unnecessary and unprofitable trouble in the perusal of my letters. If they are of my mind, they would be much gratified and amused by the inspection of yours; but there is so much of selfishness in the pleasure I derive from them, that I am not altogether willing they should share it with me.

The precise state of actual negotiation between France and Russia is not sufficiently critical to be known without the pale of the two cabinets. The details that are known would not interest you much. There has been recently a relaxation

of preparations on both sides. Both the Emperors have said they *hoped* the peace of the north would not be disturbed, but each has in a civil manner dared the other to fire the first gun. This fear of being charged with having fired the first gun seems to be the only thread by which the peace of the world hangs. What a spider's web it is the *affair* of the *Little Belt* may show.

England is no doubt anxious for a reconciliation with Russia, which becomes important to her in proportion as she approaches to the turn of rupture with us. Hitherto, however, her advances have been received with great coolness. A Portuguese minister landed from a British frigate at Reval in June, and since then another frigate has brought home a few Russian prisoners who had been left in England. She was received however in a manner by no means flattering, and allowed no communication with the shore excepting to land the prisoners. Some English people who were here, and had received permission from the Emperor to embark in her and return to England, found her already gone when they arrived at Reval, and were sent after her in a flag of truce. The English partisans here have indulged themselves in hopes that this indulgence of the Emperor to a few individuals portended a great advance towards peace; but in reality it was nothing but the result of a personal and generous sentiment of the Emperor's, to return in kind the politeness of the English government, without having any connection whatever with the political system of the Empire.

A large number of vessels, American and others, have arrived here indirectly from England in ballast. They came to carry back hemp, which is in great demand and at very high prices in England. This is paid for almost entirely in cash, for there has been no importation of English goods, and scarcely any of colonial articles from England. The course

of exchange therefore upon England has risen from thirty to forty per cent, and nearly in the same proportion upon Hamburg, Paris and Amsterdam. It has even arrested the depreciation in the paper currency of this country, but has not raised its credit in the same degree with the rate of exchange.

We have become acquainted with a Mr. and Mrs. Bentzon, who we are informed were your fellow passengers from Newport to L'Orient. The lady is the first of our fair country-women that we have seen here. They are lately from Paris, and propose to return there before winter. Mr. Bentzon is now laid up with the gout or rheumatism[1]. I am etc.

## TO BENJAMIN WATERHOUSE

St. Petersburg, 28 August, 1811.

Dear Sir:

Your favor of 19 February and 20 May were received by me within a short time of one another. The first was brought as far as Paris by Mr. Erving, and forwarded to me from that city by an occasional Russian courier. The second was delivered me by Captain Lovett, who arrived here in a vessel owned by Mr. Thorndike. Both of them gave me great pleasure by the information of your own health and that of your lady and family, and by much pleasing intelligence respecting your own concerns and those of public affairs.

I have seen in the newspapers I believe all the numbers

[1] "This is a Danish gentleman, who belonged to the island of Santa Cruz, and was a member of the government there until it was taken by the English. He then went to New York, and there married a Miss Astor of that city." Ms. Diary, August 8, 1811.

addressed by *Leolin* to Mr. Otis, one of which you inclosed in your last letter; but I have never heard and am unable to conjecture who was the author.[1] His *manner* is respectful and moderate perhaps even to excess. When men have got to that stage of political violence, indicated by the resolutions which Mr. Otis did not think it unbecoming or unjustifiable in him to support, the mild and soothing forms of *Leolin* can have no more effect upon them than a barrel of oil would have to allay a hurricane. As however there may be still some well meaning citizens, whom cool reasoning and soft persuasion may recall from treason and rebellion, I am fully of opinion that Leolin deserves well of his country, and I hope that his writings had the effect for which they were intended.

I have also seen some of the numbers addressed to the People of the United States, and published in the newspapers by Mr. Pickering. As I had long known this man's honesty, and in particular his regard to truth, was subordinate to the violence of his passions and to his vanity, I was not at all surprised either at the coarseness or at the falsehood of his attacks upon the reputation of my father. His primary object in writing at that time was so obviously to secure his own reëlection, that it was natural for him to *suspect* others of passions as selfish and contracted as his own, and with him, *suspicion* confirmed by a proper dose of hatred is systematically equivalent to proof. I certainly felt indignant at the effusions of his malice against my father, but as there was no immediate effect injurious to him that they could produce, I should have thought them in America, as I think them here, deserving only of silent contempt.

[1] These letters, four in number, written by James Trecothick Austin, were printed in the Boston *Patriot*, and republished in a pamphlet, *Resistance to Laws of the United States, considered in four letters to Hon. H. G. Otis*, 1811.

My father's reputation with posterity has a foundation which it is not in such men as Pickering to shake.

The general policy of all the American states ever since the acknowledgment of their independence has been peace with all the world, and seclusion from the political system of Europe. It is not difficult to see that under our federal constitution such must be the policy of their executive, in whose hands soever it may be placed. But Europe is perpetually struggling to draw us into the vortex of her policy and her views. More than once there has been imminent danger that we should be so drawn in, but at no period so great danger as at present. The folly of England and the artifices of France alike tend to produce this crisis, which will probably be further precipitated by our internal factions and the turbulent ambition of our party leaders. A war with England will so totally change the face of everything in the United States, that I, who delight in peace as much as Fleury, have as long as possible turned my eyes away from the contemplation of it. I hope there are those in our country who have duly reflected, and with an eye to events now more than probable, upon the difficulties, dangers and unavoidable evils which will attend a war, and upon the resources which may be brought into operation to carry it on and bring it to a just and honorable conclusion. Some of its miseries have been anticipated and foretold, but there are many others equally menacing which, by being thought of in season, may perhaps be averted. As to our resources and means they have been depreciated and underrated by party writers, and perhaps as much exaggerated by others. They are indeed great, but the most formidable difficulty will be to bring them forth.

I have learnt by accounts of a later date than your letter, that both branches of our legislature this year are republican.

Considering the great and increasing difficulties of our public affairs, and the extraordinary exertions made by the federalists, the result was honorable to the steadiness and sober sense of the people. The remarks of Governor Gerry's speech upon the resolutions of the Boston caucus were not only just, but they contained some hints and cautions to their author and supporters which I hope will make some impression upon their feelings. Those gentlemen needed a little admonition to inform them what game they were playing. It is a strange thing to me that the Boston federalists in particular should have yielded up to the guidance of the weakest heads and most furious tempers of their party. Such people, it is true, are always the busiest and the noisiest partisans, and in times of heat often push themselves by their mere bustle much above their natural level, but they can bring nothing but discomfiture and shame to their associates, and were it possible they could acquire an ascendency in the government, their accession to power would be a signal of calamity to the nation.

It gives me much pleasure to learn that you have hitherto been so successful in your struggles against a persecution, much of which I never could attribute to anything but a wretched bias of party politics. I wish you may derive as much profit and pleasure from the publication of the Botanist as you did from the delivery of your lectures. Mr. Gray's establishment and patronage of the vaccine institution for seamen is worthy of his judicious and benevolent mind, always bent upon purposes of usefulness. I rejoice too that it is placed under your management. I wish as much as you that you could spend a month at St. Petersburg without the labor of getting here. Besides the motives, which while I am here myself would always prompt me to join in this wish, I have now a particular and additional one—for I could

then ask you to vaccinate my little daughter who is not quite three weeks old.

News I suppose you will not expect from the North Pole; here I could scarcely give you any other. We are already far advanced in autumn and begin to make fires. I have none yet in the room where I write you, but my fingers are so pinched with cold, that I can scarcely hold the pen; yet I cannot lay it aside without requesting to be respectfully remembered to Mrs. Waterhouse, and offering my best regards to all your young family. Being, dear sir, with sincere attachment, etc.

## TO THE SECRETARY OF STATE

No. 65. [JAMES MONROE]

ST. PETERSBURG, 30 August, 1811.

SIR:

In the London *Courier*, a ministerial paper of 30 July, there is a letter or a memoir, announced by an editorial article with inflated solemnity, as perhaps the most important state paper ever laid before the English nation, and purporting to have been addressed by the Duke of Cadore, whose name appears to it in form of signature, to Prince Kurakin the Russian ambassador in France.[1] It bears date 30 October, 1810, and is repeatedly declared by the English gazetteer to be of unquestionable authenticity. It is a very stupid fabrication, which appears from its internal evidence to have been written by some hireling scribbler of the present British ministry, who after a clumsy distortion of the commonplace accusations against Britain and British policy,

[1] Adams, *Memoirs*, August 28, 1811.

which are often introduced into French state papers, and a silly declamation against the constitution and present reigning family of England, imputes to the Duke of Cadore language and sentiments about as suitable to his character as would be a panegyric of the Emperor Napoleon from the lips of Mr. Perceval or Lord Wellesley. But the editorial history of this publication is more curious than the performance itself. It says that during the last autumn there was some apparent wavering in the political system of Russia. That this memoir was then written by the Duke of Cadore to convince the Emperor Alexander that it was necessary for the peace and safety of the continent of Europe that the British constitution should be changed, or that the present reigning family of England should be removed from the throne. That it was sent by the Russian ambassador to his court, where it did not succeed in obtaining its intended effect. That it was communicated by the Russian government to me, that the United States might know how the French Minister of Foreign Affairs spoke of them. That a copy of it was sent by me to my government, and to my father, through whom it was first published.

It will be well known to you, sir, that I never sent a copy of this paper or of anything like it to my government, and I presume it will be needless for me to add that I never sent any such to my father, and never received any such communication from the Russian government. So far as my name is concerned the whole story is a fiction, as to my mind there is not a doubt but is all the rest.

Having met the French ambassador yesterday at Count Romanzoff's, he spoke to me of this paper, which he had not then seen. But as he expected to receive it in the evening, he promised to call upon me this day at noon. He accordingly came having seen the paper in a different gazette,

*The Pilot*, of 31 July, but extracted from the publication in the *Courier* of the preceding day. He supposes it to have been published with the countenance or connivance of the British ministry, to hold up an appearance in the public mind of a good understanding between the British and Russian governments, and to sow or inflame dissensions between France and Russia and between France and the United States. Notwithstanding the contemptuous neglect with which Lord Wellesley treated the complaint addressed to him by Mr. Pinkney, respecting the forgery of ships papers, I do not believe that this publication was made with the previous knowledge of the British ministers, though it is clearly the production of one of their partisans. Its aim appears rather to recommend their wisdom and virtue to the Prince Regent in preference to the opposition, and to convince the nation of the absolute necessity of continuing the war. As an experiment upon the credulity of the public it is not an ingenious contrivance, and perhaps it may only be an article from the shop of Mr. Van Sander, to affect the prices on the stock exchange for a day.

There are, however, other indications that the British government wish to foster an opinion among their own people, that there is already a good harmony prevailing between them and Russia. Precisely at the same time when this notable *state paper* was circulated, four or five vessels loaded with lead, saltpetre, sulphur and gunpowder were dispatched from an English port, under convoy of a sloop of war, and destined to Reval; their departure was emphatically announced in the gazettes as demonstrating the perfect good understanding already subsisting between England and Russia. The sloop of war was commanded by a Captain Fenthan,[1] whose father and two brothers are officers in the

[1] In the *American Historical Review*, XI. 89, the name is printed Fenshaw.

Russian service. They all arrived last week at Reval, and Captain Fenthan sent a request to his father and brothers to see them, stating in his letter that he had arrived there *upon an important service*. This circumstance has occasioned many speculations here, and an opinion was becoming very general that the concert and good understanding of which the English gazettes boasted had really existed. The Emperor permitted General Fenthan and his sons to visit their kinsman according to his request, but he directed that all the vessels, as well the storeships as the sloop of war, should be ordered immediately to depart.[1] So that if there has been any concert either attempted or effected between the parties, at least they have not concerted the manner in which it was to be manifested. A similar aversion to any external appearance of agreement on the part of Russia, had occurred before on the arrival of the frigate which brought the prisoners. She was allowed to land them, but the captain was informed that he must have no other communication with the shore, and was refused the permission which he asked of sending even his surgeon to purchase some medicinal drugs for the use of the ship.

It is not impossible that the English government may have been informed from this country that the articles of lead, saltpetre, sulphur and gunpowder were wanted here, and

[1] "Those newspapers and the ships arriving here at the same time put us all here into such a fluster, as you, who know the ground, will readily conceive. There was much chuckling in one quarter. Some long faces in another. On 'change the whispering and the buzzing, and the asserting and the denying, and the head-shaking, and the mysterious look of *wisdom*, lasted longer than usual—four or five days at least. At last it turns out that the Emperor gave permission to General Fenthan and his sons to visit their relation, on board the sloop of war, and then he and his storeships received a notification to depart as they came, and that if they did not go with all due speed, their next notice would be that there was still *powder* and *ball* to spare in Russia, as much as was needed to be employed against the *Common Enemy* [Napoleon.]" *To Alexander Hill Everett*, September 2, 1811.

would be received, if allowed by them to be sent hither from England. But they were certainly not led to expect that it might be done with such notoriety, or to conclude that it was by Russia considered as equivalent to a treaty of peace.

*In the month of June a young Polish nobleman, a chamberlain of the Emperor Alexander, name Prince Lubomirski, was introduced to me, and informed me that he had it in contemplation to visit the United States. He asked me for letters of introduction, and I gave him one for the President, and several others. I understood, though not from himself, that it was probable he would first go to England. He actually went there, and upon his arrival had a special permission to land, and to go to London. It was immediately after his arrival that these vessels were dispatched, and it is now the belief of different persons here that he was charged with a secret mission by the Emperor Alexander.*

*The ambassador however avowed the fullest conviction that there is no political intercourse whatever between Russia and England, and this day assured me, in the most positive terms, that there was no present prospect of a war between Russia and France.*[1] A traveler just arrived from Germany, asserts that there are between nine and ten thousand men constantly employed to strengthen and extend the fortifications of Dantzig, which some months since was declared by the French government to be *in a state of siege*. I am with high respect, etc.

[1] Cypher.

## TO JOHN ADAMS

ST. PETERSBURG, 31 August, 1811.

DEAR SIR:

In a former letter I have thanked you for the two pamphlet speeches of Mr. Quincy made at the last session of Congress, on the admission of the Orleans territory as a state into the Union, and upon his proposed amendment to Mr. Macon's proposed amendment of the constitution. But I have not yet given you the reflections which occurred to my mind upon the perusal of them.

It was my opinion at the time of the Louisiana purchase, that upon the principles on which the constitution of the United States was founded, the consent both of the people of the United States and of the people of Louisiana was necessary to make the latter a part of the American Union. I considered that France could cede only her right of property to the territory, and that the right of sovereignty inherent in the people of the country, when the jurisdiction of France had ceased by the cession, could be ceded only by some act of their own, and acquired by some act of the people of the United States. I deemed an amendment to the constitution the most proper form in which this act of the people could be performed, and moved in Senate for the appointment of a committee to consider the subject in reference to this view of it, and report their opinion concerning it. I drew up even an amendment, which I supposed adequate to accomplish the business, and which I believed if it could obtain the sanction of two-thirds of the two houses, would easily receive that of the State legislatures and of the people of Louisiana, represented as they might think proper.[1] This

[1] See Vol. III. 20, *supra*.

was my homage to republican principle, that the sovereign power originally resides in the people, and can be delegated only by their free consent. I showed my proposed amendment to Mr. Madison, then Secretary of State, and to Mr. Pickering, then my colleague in the Senate. It was not approved by either of them. They both, however, admitted the correctness of the principle. Mr. Madison's objection was to the wording of the amendment, which he thought too long and not congenial to the style of the constitution. He thought that the amendment in these words, "Louisiana is admitted as a part of this Union," would be proper and sufficient. My amendment was much longer—a general power to Congress to annex new territories to the Union at their discretion, the very thing which Mr. Quincy's speech considers a power so monstrous. It was exactly that, which my statement proposed to confer upon Congress in express terms. Mr. Pickering's objection was that any such amendment would be useless, the principle of the sovereignty of the people being as he thought altogether theoretical, and in respect to such cessions of jurisdiction as that of the Louisiana treaty always disregarded in practice. I could not obtain in Senate even the appointment of the committee for which I had moved. I then moved the two resolutions to which Mr. Quincy referred in his speech. I have neither the Journals of the Senate nor my own private journal of that time at hand, but I believe there were three resolutions, but the third was perhaps only the proposition of a measure resulting from the principles declared in the others. They excited a long and very warm debate on the first resolution, the *previous question* was moved by General Jackson, and afterwards withdrawn upon a suggestion from his side of the House that the previous question would be tantamount to a formal admission of the principle. In truth I never saw

men more embarrassed with a principle than the great majority of the Senate appeared to be on that day. But in the debate I was perfectly alone. Mr. Tracy, who seconded my motion, supported me on the question which immediately arose, whether it *should be considered*, and on the discussion concerning the previous question he and one or two more voted with me on my first resolution. Mr. Pickering took no part in the debate, affected to be very busy writing letters or reading newspapers while it was going on, and when the question was taken, desired to be excused from voting, *because it was on a motion of his colleague*. His colleague thought it would have been more ingenuous had he voted at once against the resolution, and more delicate if abstaining from delicacy to vote, he had left his place as was usual in such cases without formally assigning his motive. The keen and even angry opposition which he encountered from others did not displease him so much as this pretension to indulgence. General Dayton who wished the Senate to refuse to consider the resolutions, and severely tasked Tracy for seconding my motions, was at least candid and professed no scruples of delicacy.

So it was, however, that my propositions were rejected in Senate by almost a unanimous vote. Congress did then exercise the powers of sovereignty over the people of Louisiana, and have continued to do from that time. Notwithstanding this fate of my resolutions I still think that on republican principles, it was the assumption of power which had not been delegated, and thus far Mr. Quincy's opinions harmonize with mine. But the consent of the people, which I consider necessary to legitimate power, may be subsequent as well as antecedent by express grant. The people of the United States, including the inhabitants of Louisiana, have now for eight years quietly submitted

to the exercise by Congress of sovereign jurisdiction over the whole territory of Louisiana. It is now too late to recur to the first principles of human association, and most specially too late for the purpose of depriving the people of Louisiana of the rights, privileges and advantages, to which as citizens of the United States they are entitled. Among which perhaps the most important to them is the right to form a state government of their own, and to be admitted as a member of the Union into the national councils. After denying them for eight years the benefit of an abstract principle, and ruling them by an authority which they had not granted, it would be equally unjust and absurd to recur to that very abstract principle, to exclude them forever from its benefits and even from the common rights of American freemen.

The question whether Louisiana should become a part of the American Union *and in what manner*, was therefore settled eight years ago, and at this time I can see no basis for a constitutional question. The express authority to Congress to admit new states into the Union covers the whole ground, and where the express letter is so explicit, my understanding is not very accessible to a constructive restriction to be inferred from a conjectural intention of those who made the constitution of the United States. Yet on such a pin's point rests the whole of Mr. Quincy's argument. I neither admit nor believe, that the framers of the constitution intended to limit the admission of new states into the Union to the original territory of the United States. If such a limitation had been intended, it would have been expressed. By the old confederation there was an express provision for the admission of Canada, though Mr. Quincy does not in his speech appear to know it. The constitution having been made after the peace, it became improper to retain

this clause, and therefore the power was given to Congress in general terms; but a mere comparison between the confederation and the constitution, if Mr. Quincy will take the trouble to make it, will show him that the power to admit new States was substituted for the clause authorizing the admission of Canada. I think, though of this I am not sure, he will find the same thing expressly stated in the *Federalist.*[1] It is true the power in the constitution *applies* to the admission of states within the original territory of the Union; but excepting Mr. Quincy's gratuitous supposition, I see not the shadow of a reason to believe that it was intended to apply so *exclusively.*

The rest of Mr. Quincy's speech seems to me a mere appeal to small passions and local jealousies. If in a Boston town meeting a North End orator should arise and say that for his part, all the fire of his patriotism spent itself between the Mill-Bridge and the Winnisimmet Ferry, that he warned the long skirted gentlemen of Fort Hill and Mount Vernon, that the North End would not long submit to be trampled upon by them, and that if after having purchased and annexed to the town a part of Dorchester, anybody should ever presume to build houses there, and to dwell in them, and then come to town meeting and out-vote the neighborhood of Charles river, then it would be the right and the duty of the End to put up an independent sovereignty of their own, amicably if they could, violently if they must; the discourse would certainly not be so eloquent as Mr. Quincy's, but would be quite as reasonable, and perhaps at the North End quite as popular. I love my native land, I believe, as much as Mr. Quincy, and I feel an attachment of sentiment to the very spot of my birth which will quit me only with my life. But I could take by the hand as a fellow-citizen a

[1] See *Federalist*, No. XLIII.

man born on the banks of the Red River or the Missouri with just the same cordiality, that I could at least half a million of natives of Massachusetts, with whom I never had and probably never shall have any other relation than that of being their fellow-citizen. To attempt to limit the rights and duties and relations resulting from political association within the necessarily narrow bounds of personal affection, friendship or consanguinity, is to look at the moon through a microscope. The whole continent of North America appears to be destined by Divine Providence to be peopled by one *nation*, speaking one language, professing one general system of religious and political principles, and accustomed to one general tenor of social usages and customs. For the common happiness of them all, for their peace and prosperity, I believe it indispensable that they should be associated in one federal Union. The relative proportion of power between the different members of this Union is as insignificant, as the same question between North End and South End. This is totally subordinate to all important and all absorbing principle of union. I have no apprehension that the people of Massachusetts will be trampled upon by the power of the Union, though their relative proportion of that power should become as small as that of Rhode Island or Delaware is now in comparison to the whole. But let that federal Union which secures to each member the sympathies of the same body once be dissolved, and every part will in turn inevitably be trampled upon by the others, and America like the rest of the earth will sink into a common field of battle for conquerors and tyrants.

I have not left myself room for my animadversions upon the oration against patronage and place. Your own remarks upon it are enough, perhaps it was meant only as a *jeu d'esprit*. My duty to my mother and love to my

boys. My wife is getting well and my daughter craves your blessing.

## TO WILLIAM PLUMER

ST. PETERSBURG, 8 September, 1811.

DEAR SIR:

. . . . . .

I give you many thanks for the view of public affairs and of the state of parties contained in your letter. Since you wrote many and great changes have taken place. Some of them have been made known to us here by the letters and newspapers which we have received, and of many we must of course still be uninformed. The state of our foreign relations as marked out by the non-intercourse act of last session of Congress; by the condemnation of thirty or forty of our vessels in England under the Orders in Council, and merely for having been bound for France; by the continued misconduct and outrages of France herself; by the extraordinary and unaccountable transaction between the *President* Frigate and the *Little Belt* sloop of war; by the termination of Mr. Pinkney's mission to England and the commencement of that of Mr. Foster to the United States, appear approaching to a crisis which seems to render a foreign war utterly unavoidable. If anything can avert it, the death of George the Third will be that event. As yet no account of it has been received here; but in all probability it must take place and be known in the United States before you receive this letter.[1] The accession of a new King in England will undoubtedly produce some important changes of policy, but whether it will bring among them a system founded on

[1] In this year the reign of George III practically came to an end, though he lived in insanity and blindness until January 29, 1820.

common sense in regard to their relations with America, can only be ascertained by time. During the whole reign which is terminating with circumstances so striking that the hand of Heaven seems visible in them, the spirit of delirium and of stubbornness, the Evil Spirit from the Lord which troubled Saul, has had almost constant rule over the kingdom of Great Britain. It has had tremendous consequences upon the destinies of our generation, consequences far beyond the calculation of contemporaneous politicians. In our country, the theatre upon which it first carried fire and sword, the benevolence of Providence has long since brought great and preëminent good out of evil. In Europe darkness and gloom, blood and desolation yet prevail. Humane and pious minds can only pray and hope that out of this darkness light will also in due time be made to appear.

## TO GEORGE WASHINGTON ADAMS [1]

St. Petersburg, 1 and 8 September, 1811.

My Dear Son:

In your letter of 18 January to your mama you mentioned that you read to your Aunt Cranch a chapter in the Bible,

[1] September 1, 1811. "I began this morning the first of a series of letters which I intend to write to my son George upon subjects of serious import. I have had this project in contemplation several months, and have hitherto done nothing. My intention is extensive, but not well defined in my own mind. I reflected upon it so much this morning that I wrote but little. . . .

8. "After finishing a letter begun three or four days ago I continued that to my son George, which I intend to be the first of a series. But as I advance, I find the want of a plan arranged in my own mind. I am already so much dissatisfied with what I have written, find my ideas so undigested and confused, feel so much my own ignorance upon the subjects concerning which I mean to instruct him, and

or a lecture of Dr. Doddridge's annotations every evening. This information gave me great pleasure, for so great is my veneration for the Bible, and so strong my belief that when duly read and meditated upon it is of all the books in the world that which contributes most to make men good, wise and happy, that the earlier my children begin to read it, and the more steadily they pursue the practice of reading it throughout their lives, the more lively and confident will be my hopes that they will prove useful citizens to their country, respectable members of society, and a real blessing to their parents.

But I hope that you have now arrived at an age to understand that reading, even of the Bible, is a thing in itself neither good nor bad, but that all the good that can be drawn from it is by the use and improvement of what you have read with the help of your own reflections. Young people sometimes boast of how many bòoks and how much they have read; when instead of boasting they ought to be ashamed of having wasted so much time to so little profit. I advise you, my son, in whatever you read, and most of all in reading the Bible to remember that it is for the purpose of making you wiser and more virtuous.

I have myself for many years made it a practice to read through the Bible once every year. I have always endeavored to read it with the same spirit and temper of mind which I now recommend to you. That is, with the intention and desire that it may contribute to my advancement in wisdom and virtue. My desire is indeed very imperfectly successful, for like you and like the Apostle Paul, I find a law in my members warring against the law of my mind. But as I

am so remote from the helps to which I might recur for assistance, that I am afraid I have in this instance, as in numberless others, undertaken more than I can execute. I have not yet however abandoned it entirely." Ms. Diary.

know that it is my nature to be imperfect, so I know it is my duty to aim at perfection; and feeling and deploring my own frailties, I can only pray Almighty God for the aid of his spirit to strengthen my good desires and to subdue my propensities to evil, for it is from him that every good and every perfect gift descends.

My custom is to read four or five chapters of the Bible every morning immediately after rising from bed. It employs about an hour of my time, and seems to me the most suitable manner of beginning the day. But as other cares, duties and occupations engage the remainder of it, I have perhaps never devoted a sufficient portion of my hours to meditation upon what I have read thus. Even meditation itself is often fruitless, unless it has some special object in view. Useful thoughts arise in the mind and pass away without being remembered, or even applied to any good purpose. Like seed scattered upon the surface of the ground which the birds devour, or the wind blows away, or which rots without taking root, however good the soil may be upon which it is cast.

We are all, my dear George, unwilling to confess our own infirmities, even to ourselves; and when our own consciences are too honest to conceal them from us, our self love is always busy either in attempting to disguise them to us under false and delusive colors, or in seeking out excuses and apologies to conceal them to our own minds. Thus, although I am always sensible that I have not derived from my assiduous perusal of the Bible (and I might apply the same remark to almost everything else that I do) all the benefit that I might and ought, I am as constantly endeavoring to persuade myself that it is not my own fault. Sometimes I say to myself I do not undertsand what I have read. I cannot help it. I did not make my own understanding.

There are many things in the Bible hard to be understood, as St. Peter expressly says of Paul's Epistles. Some are hard in the Hebrew and Greek, the original languages in which the Scriptures were written. Some are harder still in the translations. I have been obliged to lead a wandering life about the world, and scarcely ever have had at hand the books which might help me to surmount the difficulties. Conscience sometimes asks the question, whether my not understanding many passages is not owing to my want of attention in reading them. I must admit that it is; a full proof of which is that every time I read the Book through, I do understand some passages which I never understood before, and which I should have understood at a former reading had it been effected with a sufficient degree of attention. Then in answer to myself I say, it is true. But I cannot always command at all my own attention, and never can to the degree that I should wish. My mind is oftentimes so full of other things, absorbed in bodily pain, or engrossed by passions, or distracted by pleasures, or exhausted by dissipation, that I cannot give to my proper daily employment the attention that I gladly would, and that is absolutely necessary to make it "fruitful of good works." This acknowledgment of my weakness is just; but for how much of it I am still accountable to myself and to God, I hardly dare acknowledge to myself. Is it bodily pain? How often was that brought upon me by my own imprudence and folly? Was it passion? Heaven has given to every human being the *power* of controlling his passions, and if he neglects or uses it, the fault is his own and he must be answerable for it. Was it pleasure? Why did I indulge in it? Was it dissipation? This is the most inexcusable of all, for it must have been occasioned by my own thoughtlessness or irresolution.

It is of no use to discover our own faults and infirmities,

unless the discovery prompts us to amendment. I have thought that if in addition to the daily hour which I give to the reading of the Bible, I should also from time to time, and especially on Sundays, apply another occasional hour to communicate to you the reflections which arose in my mind upon its perusal, it might not only tend to fix and promote my own attention to the excellent instructions of that book, but perhaps also your advancement in its knowledge and wisdom. At your age it is probable that you have the greater difficulties to understand all that you read in the Bible, than I have at mine, and if you have as much self observation as your letters show, you will be sensible of as much want of attention, both voluntary and involuntary, as I have acknowledged in myself. I intend, therefore, for the purpose of contributing to your improvement and my own, to write you several letters, in due time to follow this, and in which I shall endeavor to show you how you may derive the most advantage to yourself from the perusal of the Scriptures. It is probable that when you receive the letters, you will not on first reading them entirely understand them. If that should be the case, ask your grandparents, or your uncle or aunt, to explain them to you, and if you still find them too hard, put them upon file and lay them by two or three years; after which read them again and you will find them easy enough.

It is essential, my son, in order that you may go through this life with comfort to yourself and usefulness to your fellow creatures, that you should form and adopt certain rules or principles for the government of your own conduct and temper. Unless you have such rules and principles there will be numberless occasions on which you will have no guide for your government but your passions. In your infancy and youth you have been and will be for some years

under the authority and control of your friends and instructors. You must soon come to the age when you must govern yourself. You have already come to that age in many respects. You know the difference between right and wrong. You know some of your duties, and the obligation you are under of becoming acquainted with them all. It is in the Bible that you must learn them, and from the Bible how to practise them.

Those duties are to *God*, to your *fellow creatures*, and to *yourself*. "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength, and thy neighbor as thyself" (Luke x, 27; Mat. xxii, 40). "On these two commandments (Jesus Christ expressly says) hang all the law and the prophets." That is to say that the whole purpose of divine revelation is to inculcate them efficaciously upon the minds of men.

You will perceive that I have spoken of *duties to yourself*, distinct from those to God and to your fellow creatures, while Jesus Christ speaks only of *two* commandments. The reason is, because Christ and the commandments repeated by him consider *self-love* as so implanted in the heart of every man by the law of his nature that it required no other commandment to establish its influence over the heart. And so great do they know its power to be that they demand no other measure for the love of your neighbor than that which they know we shall have for ourselves. But from the love of God and the love of our neighbor result *duties* to ourselves as well as to them, and they are all to be learnt in equal perfection by searching the Scriptures.

Let us then search the Scriptures, and in order to pursue our inquiries with methodical order, let us consider the various sources of instruction that we may draw from in this study. The Bible contains the revelation of the will of God;

it contains the history of the creation, of the world and of mankind; and afterwards the history of one peculiar nation, certainly the most extraordinary nation that has ever appeared upon earth. It contains a system of religion and morality, which we may examine upon its own merits, independent of the sanction it receives from being the word of God, and it contains a numerous collection of books, written at different ages of the world by different authors, which we may survey as curious monuments of antiquity and as literary compositions. In what light soever we regard it, whether with reference to *revelation*, to *history*, to *morality* or to *literature*, it is an invaluable and inexhaustible mine of knowledge and virtue.

I shall number separately these letters that I mean to write you on the subject of the Bible. And as, after they are finished, I shall perhaps ask you to read them all together or to look over them again myself, you must keep them on a separate file. I wish that hereafter they may be useful to your brothers and sister as well as to you. As you will receive every one of them as a token of my affection for you during my absence, I pray that they may all be worthy of being read by them all with benefit to themselves, if it please God that they may live to be able to understand them.

From your affectionate father.[1]

[1] The series of letters, of which this is the first, was printed in 1848, with the letters of Abigail Adams, and again, separately, in 1850.

## TO JOHN ADAMS [1]

ST. PETERSBURG, 14 September, 1811.

DEAR SIR:

Some time in the month of June last there was published in the Boston *Patriot* a pretended state paper, purporting to be signed by the Duke of Cadore, and addressed to his Excellency [2]—as in extreme secrecy—and containing a commonplace invective against the British nation, constitution and royal family, mixed up with a panegyric upon the Duke of York and the incendiary Jackson; a curse upon the murder of Louis 16 and his murderers, a dissertation upon Wicliff, Huss, Luther and the price of seats at Covent Garden theatre, abuse upon Erskine, Cobbett, the Burdett party and ministerial opposition in England; and, as the choicest effusion of gall, of which all the rest seems to be only the froth, an allusion to the government of the United States as the "weakest and most contemptible of governments."

How the editors of the *Patriot* can have been imposed upon to take and publish as a genuine state paper what appears to me the most stupid, because the most glaring

[1] September 3. "The French Ambassador sent me the *Moniteur* from the 11th to the 16th of August containing the Memoir with the name of the Duke of Cadore, in a translation from the *London Courier* of 30 July, and also a number of paragraphs extracted from several other English newspapers concerning it. The *Moniteur* declares it an English forgery. Count Romanzoff afterwards sent me a packet from Mr. Russell at Paris, brought by a courier. Mr. Russell encloses to me the *Moniteurs* of 13 and 14 August containing the Memoir, and some paragraphs about it, and the *New York Commercial Advertiser* of 22 June, also containing it, and announcing it as extracted from the Boston *Patriot*. Mr. Russell's letter to me expresses great doubts whether it was genuine or not." Ms. Diary. The paper appeared in the Boston *Patriot*, June 19, 1811.

[2] Prince Kurakin, Russian Ambassador at Paris.

forgery that I ever saw is not for me to explain. They do not expressly warrant its authenticity, but they declare their own persuasion of it, not only from their confidence in the source from which they received it, but from what they consider as its internal evidence.

It appears to have been published in many of the federal newspapers in the United States, whose editors were doubtless highly delighted with the terms in which it speaks of their government. I have it in the *New York Commercial Advertiser* of 22 June, which has been sent me by Mr. Russell from Paris, and in which the paragraph containing this insult is printed over a second time in a different page of the paper with evident marks of exultation. There is also a little comment of sympathy and love for the English king and constitution, natural enough for its place, but into which the *Patriot*, the original publisher, had not been duped.

But the great fortune of this *state paper* was to be made in England. The London *Courier* of 30 July published it as the most important state paper ever laid before the British nation; and instead of speaking like the American editors in terms of doubt or hesitation with regard to its authenticity, the *Courier* not only solemnly declares that it is beyond all question authentic, but undertakes to give a history of its publication. It says that during the last autumn (the piece is dated 30 October, 1810) there appeared to be some wavering and irresolution in the policy of the Russian cabinet. That the paper was then written and addressed by the Duke of Cadore to the Russian ambassador at Paris, to be laid before his government, in order to persuade the Emperor of Russia that the war with England must be continued until the British constitution should be destroyed or the present royal family driven from the throne. That

the Russian ambassador accordingly sent it to his court, where it did not prove successful. That the Russian government, to let the United States know how their government was spoken of by the French Minister of Foreign Affairs, *and perhaps to have the paper made known in England*, communicated it to Mr. J. Q. Adams, American minister at St. Petersburg, who transmitted a copy of it to his own government and also to his father, through whom it was first published.

From the *Courier*, a ministerial paper, this miserable fabrication was copied into many of the other English newspapers, but in most of them is recognized as a forgery. The *Courier* persisted in asserting its authenticity, and in the tale of its having been transmitted by me and published by you. A translation of it was soon after published in the *Moniteur*, and copied into the *Journal de l'Empire* with a few short notes, in one of which it is declared to have been forged in England. A German translation with the notes of the *Moniteur* has appeared in the Hamburg *Correspondent*, so that it has been now thoroughly circulated all over Europe, together with the falsehood which ascribes its transmission from this country to me and its publication to you.

It was in the London *Courier* that I first saw it, and then considered it in the same light as it is viewed in the note of the *Moniteur*, as a mere English forgery. I did not suspect that the imposture had ever appeared in the Boston *Patriot*, and I could not conjecture what motive could have prompted the editor of the London *Courier* to use my name as instrumental to the circulation of so wretched a fable. Some days afterwards I received a letter from Mr. Russell, inclosing the New York paper above mentioned and the *Moniteur* containing the translation. Since I knew that the first publication was in the Boston *Patriot* I am not so totally

at a loss to imagine why the English editors so boldly palmed your name and mine upon the public to avouch this infamous fraud, but I am not a little surprised that the editor of the *Patriot* should have been misled to credit so far the authenticity of the pretended memoir as to have admitted it into his paper, and to have avowed his belief that it was genuine. If the braying of the animal had not been sufficiently audible to disclose the imposition of the lion's skin, I should really have thought that the editor of the *Patriot* would have discovered him by his ears. If a dramatic author were to put in the mouth of a known character sentiments, I will not say so foolish and absurd, but so totally at war with the notorious sentiments of the person represented, he would be hooted off the stage for ignorance of the first principles of his art. That there should have been in human nature baseness enough to attempt this deception is not at all remarkable; but that there should have been in men of worth and discernment blindness enough to believe in it for a moment, is extraordinary. I am not, however, at present of opinion that it was of English invention altogether. The editor of the *Patriot* must know whence it came to him, and he may be sure it was a cheat practised upon him.[1] No such

[1] "It is utterly unaccountable to me how the Editor of the *Patriot* could have been made the dupe of what appears to me to be so clear an imposition. He says it bears the very image and superscription of the modern Caesar—which only shows how little he is acquainted with that personage, and how open he has suffered his mind to the rank absurdities, and cunning misrepresentations of Englishmen and anglified Americans. Ames tried to scare all our federal old women out of their senses by telling them with a grave face that he trembled for fear Bonaparte would take his and their children for a conscription against St. Domingo; and Walsh, with a little mincing of the matter, just enough to show that he does not believe a word of it, says that indeed he does not know but—he is no coward—but really there may be some danger of the conscription against St. Domingo. In all this however there is no forgery. Ames's fears raised a spectre before his mind's eye, which he really believed he saw, and from which he started with a shriek of horror.

paper was ever written by the Duke de Cadore, or sent by the Russian ambassador in France to this country, or communicated by the Russian government to me, or transmitted by me to any person in the United States, or (without a particle of hesitation I add) first published through you.

It is more to be regretted that the *Patriot* should have given countenance and currency to this trick of political swindling, because its intended effect and, so far as it obtained credit its real effect, must be to propagate and strengthen those false opinions and groundless jealousies which the present English ministry and their faction everywhere are attempting to impose upon mankind. Ignorant or blind to the real state of the world and to the necessity which every wise statesman must feel of adapting his political system to it, the English ministry of this day have come to the avowal that their only plan for futurity is perpetual, or at least *interminable war*. They will neither discuss nor even listen to any proposition of peace, and as in this long war, like that of the house of Saul against the house of David, they are waxing weaker and weaker while their adversary waxes stronger and stronger, they find the spirit of

Walsh affects to partake of his trepidation because he has his purposes to answer by spreading it among others; but the author of this spurious step advances one step further in the righteous cause. Hobgoblins and prophecies are not highly seasoned enough for his palate. Plain, downright forgery is his fashion of raising bugbears, and so he puts the Duke of Cadore's name to a jumble of materials as incongruous, and ridiculous as the composition of the caldron of Macbeth's witches, the result of which is to be, that Bonaparte intends to destroy the English Constitution, and dethrone the house of Hanover, and that he considers the United States as ruled by *the weakest and most contemptible of governments*. That such a wretched piece of patch work should have passed current for genuine among the profound wiseacres of the federal gazettes, that Russell or Coleman should have taken or given it all out for Gospel would have been natural enough; but I really should never have suspected quite so much *gullability* in the Editor of the *Patriot*." *To Thomas Boylston Adams*, September 25, 1811. Ms.

their people beginning to flag, and think it necessary to make them believe they are fighting for their existence, for their constitution, or for their sovereign, when in truth they are only fighting for the *Chateaux en Espagne* of their ministers. As the plain truth will not answer to justify their policy they have recourse to such falsehoods as they know to be best calculated to stimulate and to control the passions of their people. Swift in his art of political lying complains that the French king and universal monarchy had been so prodigally brought out, instead of being kept like the bears for show once a year, that they had almost lost their effect of terror. But Napoleon is a more durable bugbear than Louis 14; and, lavish as they have been of him for these nine or ten years, they have not yet worn him out. The Bonaparte panic has been made a political engine in America, too, where but for the camel, swallow and ostrich man of faction it would have been only ridiculous. With us, too, it has howled the song of war against his universal empire until it grew hoarse upon the sky; and now, when the whip-poor-will warble of Walsh and the raven croak of Pickering waste alike their sweetness on the desert air, at a moment when the talk of British outrage and insult is smarting in every honest vein, a gross, direct and palpable forgery comes with unblushing face to turn the public indignation away from its proper object, and through the Boston *Patriot* obtains access to the public mind.

Although the use of my name in this piece of villainy was first made in the London *Courier* and does not appear in the American papers, it must in all probability have been suggested to the English editors from America, and may have been intended by the original author of the spurious memoir certainly with views of no friendship or kindness for me. The *Courier* has even been grateful enough to pronounce a pane-

gyric upon yourself and me, wisely and ingeniously confounding us together as one and the same person. I believe you will be as little ambitious as myself of such praise. I have written to Mr. Russell at Paris and declared to the French ambassador here, that the whole of the story so far as my name concerned was false and destitute of all foundation. Count Romanzoff declares the same as respects the Russian government, and the Russian ambassador at Paris has equally denied having ever received anything like the pretended memoir. I have no doubt you will be equally surprised as I was, to find yourself vouched for as an authority in the *Courier* to authenticate this deception.

## TO THOMAS BOYLSTON ADAMS

ST. PETERSBURG, 25 September, 1811.

. . . . . .

Since I wrote you last I have also read in the *Aurora* the whole of Mr. R. Smith's publication,[1] and I have seen one or two more of Mr. Pickering's addresses to the people. I hear that Mr. Smith has been answered in the *National Intelligencer*, and has replied.[2] There seems to be something in that office of Secretary of State peculiarly calculated to overset underballasted minds. Edmund Randolph—peace

[1] *Address to the People of the United States*, Baltimore, 1811. It appeared in the *Aurora*, June 26. See Henry Adams, *History*, V. 378; *Writings of Madison* (Rives), II. 507, 513. An earlier "authorized explanation" had been printed in the *Aurora*, April 5, drawing out Madison's memorandum in *Writings of Madison* (Rives), II. 495.

[2] Joel Barlow wrote the reply to Smith (*National Intelligencer*), and Smith answered in the *Baltimore American*.

be to his remainders—but he like Mr. Smith was obliged to vindicate his resignation. Pickering mistook Mrs. Reynolds' paramour for President of the United States, and surrendered up his official virtue to that gay deceiver as fondly as the lady did her conjugal virtue. He did not choose to resign, and so he now vindicates his going out upon expulsion. Mr. Smith seems to have mistaken who was President too, but his optical illusion terminated in himself. As a party pamphlet his publication is written with some address; but do you think he ever put to himself the question, whether the single fact of the publication did not involve in it a *breach of trust*, more dishonorable to him and more detrimental to the public, than everything he has made out against Mr. Madison? If he did, and settled it to his own satisfaction that he should not be chargeable with such a breach of trust, he ought instead of the hackneyed and in his case not very applicable adage about measures and not men, and the dramatic parade about the dangers to which he was exposing himself, to have begun by proving as much to the satisfaction of his readers. These breaches of trust have, indeed, unfortunately been so frequent in our short history, and they have always been so much countenanced by party spirit, and so secure of impunity, that I am afraid it has infected the very principle of our national character. The vote of censure upon Mr. Pickering last winter was a tardy, feeble, and I fear ineffectual attempt to maintain the rule of secrecy, upon which alone the possibility of confidential communication between the President and Senate can subsist; and even that was too much an affair of party.[1]

[1] "It is well to enforce the observance of their injunctions of secrecy; but I cannot see any thing very heinous in Pickering's conduct in this instance. They should have begun with Stevens Thomson Mason." *John Adams to John Quincy Adams*, January 25, 1811. Ms.

I believe that our heads of departments and our ministers to foreign powers ought also to be under the restriction of an official oath, and I wish some of the thoughtful members of our national legislature would bring the subject before Congress for discussion. Our laws do not contemn the aid of oaths as ties upon human conscience in matters of revenue, where perhaps their efficacy is most questionable, and we administer quite enough of them in our custom houses to secure the payment of the paltriest impost. In the act establishing the Department of Foreign Affairs and of War there is an oath of office, "well and faithfully to execute the trust committed to him," provided to be taken by the secretaries. But there is none required by the acts establishing the Department of the Treasury and of the Navy, and none anywhere for the ministers abroad.

. . . . . .

## TO ABIGAIL ADAMS

St. Petersburg, 2 October, 1811.

Your favor of 21 June, without a number, was forwarded to me from Copenhagen by Mr. Erving, who received it from the *Radius*, which on her passage to this place was taken by a French privateer, and is still detained in Denmark. Like almost all the letters which we have received this year it brought tidings of sickness and affliction among our friends. In the sorrow which they have so often inflicted, I still bless God that they assure me of the health and welfare of my parents and of my children.

In the first letter which you wrote me this year there was an extract of a letter from Burke to Barry,[1] the painter,

[1] "That you have just subjects of indignation always, and of anger often, I do

upon which I have reflected many times since I received it. One of the reasons why I am so much an admirer of Burke is because he always thinks so much, and leads his reader to think so much upon everything that occurred within his observations. I have within a few days seen the *Edinburgh Review* of the life and works of Barry, from which you took this extract, at least I find it again there, and the history and character of Barry there given in connection with it, explains to me the only part of the extract upon which my mind had hesitated a little in assenting to its accuracy. Moderation, gentleness and indulgence to others are undoubtedly and universally of "strong prevailment" in counteracting the ill disposition of the world; but I am not sure that *a great deal of distrust of ourselves* is always calculated to produce the same effect. I readily perceive why Burke recommended it with the other qualities to Barry, because it was precisely that of which Barry stood most in need, and that for the want of which he was most severely suffering. But I believe there are many tempers and dispositions who carry the distrust of themselves to excess, and to whom it would be more wise and just to recommend confidence in themselves, and reliance upon their own judgments. My own experience of life and self observation has often led me to the conclusion that one of my failings was too much distrust of myself. In the scenes of political life, such as those that I have been engaged in, distrust of one's self renders absolutely indispensable a proportionate confidence in others.

no ways doubt. Who can live in the world without some trials of his patience? But believe me, the arms with which the ill disposition of the world are to be combatted, and the qualities by which it is to be reconciled to us, are moderation, gentleness, a little indulgence to others, and a great deal of distrust of ourselves, which are not qualities of a mean spirit, as some may possibly think them, but virtues of a great and noble mind, and such as dignify our nature as much as they contribute to our repose."

In legislative assemblies every man, whether a leader or a follower, must often sacrifice more or less his own judgment to that of those with whom he associates; and in time of party virulence these sacrifices must be greater and more frequent than in more tranquil periods. It is then that the principle of distrusting, and that of confiding in himself, becomes to every conscientious man a question of no small difficulty and delicacy, and even in the ordinary affairs of life, I have often found it a very perplexing question. Of the ill dispositions of the world it would not become me to complain. The confidence of my country in me has for many years been to say the least equal to anything that I had a right to expect, and in a very recent instance has far exceeded my own. On one occasion, however, it was withdrawn and in a very conspicuous manner by the legislature of my native State. It was for having confided in myself, and for having acted upon questions of great public interest according to the dictates of my own deliberate judgment, in opposition to the momentary feelings and heated passions of my constituents. Had I during that period followed Mr. Burke's principle of greatly distrusting myself, and of course greatly confiding in others, my conduct would have been certainly very different, and I might possibly have retained the confidence of those to whose opinions I must have sacrificed my own. But I have no reason to believe that the general confidence of my country in me would now be greater than it is, or, which is infinitely more important, that the result would have been more useful or more honorable to my country.

I am just informed by the French and German gazettes that Congress are called together by proclamation, to meet on the 4th of November, and in the English newspapers I find that there is a sort of coalition between the two quon-

dam Secretaries of State, in assailing, through the medium of the press, Mr. Madison's administration. Mr. Pickering's perseverance and tenacity are worthy of a better cause, though his *mauvaise foi* (he would certainly impute this expression to French influence) is as remarkable in his present, as it has been in many of his former publications, and his personalities show very little either of Mr. Burke's distrust of himself or of moderation, gentleness, or indulgence to others. I know not how Mr. Smith and Mr. Colvin have settled between themselves their militating claims to the composition of the letters which were to ascertain the contested title of the late Secretary's abilities; but perhaps Colvin is only one of the parasites of power, who were to raise the storm which Mr. Smith assured the people of the United States he *will* have to buffet.[1]

There are very few American vessels left here and we cannot expect the arrival of any more during the present year. At least if any others should yet arrive, they will like ourselves be obliged to remain here until next summer before they can return. I expect to send this by Mr. Loring Austin, a young gentleman who came last summer to Archangel, and is now about to embark for Boston.

Although we are within the bounds of the city of St. Petersburg, the situation where we are is so much in the country that it begins to be uncomfortable, and we intend to remove next week into the city.[2] If you have the English translation of Storck's Picture of Petersburg, I can show you where we are. Please to open the plan and look to the branch of the river marked C; that is the Nevka, upon the borders of which is our residence. This river, together with the little

[1] Colvin claimed authorship of letters to Armstrong and Turreau.

[2] His new house was at the corner of the Vosnesenskoi and the Little Officers' streets.

Nevka, marked in the plan *D*, and a small stream called the Karpoffka marked M, forms an island called the Apothecaries Island, on which a building marked 123 is designated in the explanation of the plan as the Surgery School. Our house is the next door to this building, and with only the street between them. Here is a facsimile of that part of Storck's plan. The dotted part is not upon the plan. I have added it here to show our house, garden and pier extending out upon the river, at the end of which, according to the fashion of the country, we have a flagstaff, and on the days when we receive company hoist the flag of the United States. You will see by mere inspection of the plan that the situation is quite rural, and as a mere summer residence it is as pleasant as any place of abode that ever fell to my lot. From our door down to the Karpoffka, there is a wall inclosed by low railings on both sides, extending along the bank of the river and kept in excellent order for the sole convenience of walkers. The plot marked 122 is a very large public garden, called the Apothecary's or Botanic Garden, containing a great variety of plants, and always open for walking. Beyond the river at the separation of the two Nevkas the figure in form of a spade and marked 126 indicates the Imperial Palace, the usual summer residence of the Emperor and Empress, in front of which upon the River are stationed two yachts, with an excellent band of music, who have regularly entertained us with their martial concerts at the Emperor's dining hour, between four and five o'clock, and at nine in the evening almost every day throughout the summer. We are so near, that with the open doors and windows of warm weather we heard it as if it had been before our own door. The palace is upon an island formed by the two Nevkas, contiguous to the isle of Apothecaries, and called *Thamennoi Ostroff*, which in Russian signifies Stony

Island. On the mainland beyond that island, and in sight from our windows, is the country seat of Count Strogonoff, with a large and very beautiful English garden, likewise always open to the public, and sometimes in the summer much frequented. Count Strogonoff is one of the most distinguished noblemen of the country, and is yet more illustrious by his attachment to the fine arts than by his great wealth, high rank and venerable years. In the city he has one of the finest collections of pictures extant in Europe. But his garden here has a rarer and more memorable ornament—the very tomb of Achilles, before which Alexander the Great and Julius Caesar paid their homage to the character of the hero. It was brought from Greece by the commander of a Russian fleet which was so much celebrated for its naval victories over the Turks during the reign of Catherine, and by him presented to Count Strogonoff, who has placed it with many other monuments of antiquity in his garden. There are two other large and handsome gardens open to the public in our neighborhood, and over which I have occasionally varied my daily walks. The French ambassador and the Danish minister are our near neighbors, and many others with whom we have as much intercourse as suits our mutual convenience. While the weather was fine we never wanted company, and even now we have no reason to complain of being solitary. But the leaves before my windows are falling in showers from the trees as I write. The river, as Charles tells me, is méchant, by which he means stormy. The days of dampness, and darkness, and chilling frigidity are at hand and even here. I still linger in my Russian arcadia, but the ladies and the children call for the snug comforts of the city, and at the next letter I shall write you I shall have bid a last farewell, as a residence, to the pleasant borders of the Nevka and be

once more "in populous city pent." In the meantime, adieu. We are all well.

## TO THE SECRETARY OF STATE

No. 70. [JAMES MONROE]

ST. PETERSBURG, 3 October, 1811.

SIR:

I have furnished the French Ambassador, as he requested, with a list of the American vessels which have arrived this year at Cronstadt, and have sailed again for the United States. I have also sent a copy of the same list to Mr. Russell at Paris, by a courier dispatched last Monday by Count Lauriston; and have mentioned to Mr. Russell in a letter the motive upon which it was requested—to obtain a more speedy liberation of any of them which might be captured by the French privateers said to be stationed at the passage of the Sound. When the courier was dispatched I had already heard that Mr. Barlow had sailed from Annapolis for France, and I learn this morning that he arrived the 6th of last month at Cherbourg. Having understood from Mr. Russell that it was his intention to leave Paris immediately after the minister should arrive, I have requested that Mr. Barlow would in that case open the letter addressed to Mr. Russell. I hope there will be no capture of any of the vessels, to make the interposition of either of those gentlemen with the French government necessary to obtain their release. But if there should, I shall be happy to find the good intentions of the Ambassador in asking for the list realized, by its contributing to their immediate liberation. I am not inclined to suspect any unfriendly intention towards us, as

having contributed in the slightest degree to this request. There is a frankness and good humor in the character of the Ambassador, in which deep dissimulation is not congenial. He has often very freely and explicitly avowed to me his wish for a war between the United States and England. Having in my own nature as little dissimulation as I think observable in his, I have never pretended in this respect to coincide with him in sentiment; *but I have more than once suggested to him that if his government really wished that war should be the result of English ill-usage towards the United States, it was a strange way of manifesting that desire to rivalize with England in acts of the like ill-usage, and I have not scrupled to avow to him that so long as France should continue to hold towards us such a course of conduct, it was my opinion that neither the people nor the government of the United States would engage themselves in a war which would be so conformable to her views and policy.*[1] It has assured me in strong terms of *his own*[2] wish that his government should do us justice, and his disposition to write anything that might be proper to promote the same temper there; and I am willing to believe that this was his real and principal inducement for asking the information contained in this list. *At the same time I am aware that it* might *be for purposes of an opposite nature and I know that the French Minister of Foreign Affairs has informed the French consul here that he had received advices that much English property had been introduced here under the American flag, and had enjoined upon him a most vigilant attention and a report how the fact in this was. The report which was sent by the same courier with my letter I have reason to believe was as favorable so far as concerns Americans as the truth would warrant. The consul*[3] has declared to me his opinion that every vessel which has arrived this year at Cronstadt *with*

[1] Cypher. [2] Not in cypher. [3] Cypher.

*a cargo* under any other than American colors, was loaded on English account. The number of those vessels however amounts only to eleven. As to those Americans he assured me that he fully credited the statement which I made verbally to him in conversation, and that he would report accordingly to his government. I told him that, independent of any credit which he might be disposed to give me from confidence, he might observe that the *interest* of my countrymen trading here was impulse enough for them and me to detect as much as we could the counterfeit who came as their competitors in the market, and as to the introduction of English property here, I asked his attention to two facts which in my mind amounted to complete demonstration that its amount had really been very small. The first was that during the whole season no insurance had been obtainable in London, upon shipments of goods to Russian ports in the Baltic; and the other that the course of exchange had constantly been from fifty to sixty per cent against England and in favor of Russia. He admitted the right of these facts, of the first of which he had not been aware; and he said he should not fail to avail himself of both in his report. Of the American vessels, thirty-three came in ballast, and I presume were either freighted in England, or came here for freights to England. In all these cases the government here have scarcely wished to look at the papers. Mr. *Gurieff, the Minister of Finance, to whose Department this matter now belongs, once told me in express terms that if a ship came empty, he did not care whence she came, and was not inclined to scrutinize what she was.*[1] This disposition obtained admission for the *Crescent*, though reported by Mr. Harris as irregular, and came very near carrying through the *Angerona*, when the Captain lost his papers to secure their forgery

[1] Cypher.

from detection. *The Ambassador and consul knew very well that these ships that came in ballast will return bound to England for whatever port they may have cleared out. When they have been real Americans I have not felt myself obliged to be more scrupulous in enquiring whence they came than the Russian government; it was not my duty to accuse them nor to point them out by any discrimination from the rest. They will* doubtless *return as they came, under convoy, and will be in very little danger of capture either by French or Spanish* [1] *privateers. Their freightings are certainly profitable to the general mass of our commerce, but I think it necessary to say* to you *that abuse of our flag is more difficult to detect in their trading than in the case of forgery. I have my suspicions that in more than one instance of those that came this summer, altho' the vessel and papers and even the master and crew were really American, the property was English; and I am not sure there were not cases in which everything was English but the papers. I feel my whole bounden duty therefore once more to suggest the expediency of further legislative provision against the sale of real American ship's papers, whether with or without the ship, in foreign ports.*[2]

There have been indeed several cases of American vessels, which came with *cargoes* last from England; the admission of which I have obtained. But they have all been accompanied with proof that they were dispatched from the United States, and bound here, and that they have been detained in English ports, either by capture, by stress of weather, or by the necessity of repairing or *charging* the ship. The proofs have been clear. I have interfered without hesitation, and in every instance have obtained their admission. I know also of several instances in which vessels under similar circumstance obtained admission without my interference. *There*

[1] Danish?

[2] Cypher.

*have been so many of them in all that possibly other causes than mere compulsion made some of them touch at English ports. I know that before the navigation opened this government received notice from Mr. Daschkoff that a large proportion of the American vessels coming to Russia this season would take England in their way. This was not forbidden by any law of the United States. How far it was compatible with the law of Russia was for this government to determine. I never disguised or even concealed a fact from them which could bear upon the principle when I asked for a favor or an exemption from the rigor of the ukaze, and many vessels have been admitted which the rigor of the ukaze would have excluded. It is not probable that any further questions of this nature will occur the present year, and it is too early to look forward for the ruling principles of the next, but it is not too soon to say that the safety of our real commerce with Russia may still depend upon its discrimination from the imposture which assumes its garb. . . .*[1]

## TO THE SECRETARY OF STATE

No. 71. [JAMES MONROE]

ST. PETERSBURG, 11 October, 1811.

SIR:

I received yesterday from Paris an authentic and particular account of the discourse held by the Emperor Napoleon to the Russian ambassador, at the Diplomatic Circle on the 15th of August. It comes from a person who was present,[2] and who vouched for its authenticity; and it very naturally

[1] Cypher.

[2] Probably J. S. Smith. See Adams, *Memoirs*, September 26, 1811; Vandal, *Napoléon et Alexandre I*, III. 192.

accounts for the opinion which it appears to have excited there, and which seems still to be entertained there, that hostilities would commence before the close of the present autumn. The same apprehensions are expressed in letters from various parts of Germany. Still however the confidence here remains unaltered, that it is too late to begin a war in these northern regions the present year. *I saw the French ambassador a few days ago, and he told me that he had received an explicit assurance from Keromansoff that one division of the troops in Poland received orders to march, and had actually marched to join General Kutuzoff's army. The Count, he said, had acknowledged only one division, but he, the ambassador, knew there were two, and as this was the first step towards disarming, he considered it as a favorable omen towards the further preservation of the peace.*[1] This was probably the point upon which the French Emperor manifested such a strong determination to have *explanations* before November. The Russian tariff, the protest respecting the Duchy of Oldenburg, and the armaments in Poland, were all rankling in his mind when he made this speech, and his language with respect to the Russian general and cabinet, the ambassador to whom he was speaking, and his own ambassador so recently returned, discovers an exasperated and menacing spirit. This equivocal state of things is yet continued by the uncertainty how far his northern tour was to extend; and by the fact now known here that large detachments of the cavalry of the imperial guard have arrived at Brussels, preceding him before his departure from Compiègne; yet an immediate attack is not expected here; and in answer to the threat that the conscription of 1812 should be called out, the actual order has been issued here for a new levy of four men to every five hundred taxable inhabitants, throughout

[1] Cypher.

the empire. It will add nearly one hundred and thirty thousand men to the present numbers of the Russian army. It is scarcely a year since the last levy was made of three men in five hundred, and the losses during the year have been scarcely anything beyond the ordinary average of mortality.

*If the war should not commence soon there is, I believe, nobody who thinks it possible it should be postponed longer than until the next summer. The Emperor Napoleon's confidence of success, plainly avowed in his address, is founded on the consciousness of his strength, and upon his conviction that Russia has no general officers capable of commanding armies in opposition to an enemy like France. In this opinion he is not singular. His present ambassador here told me that what he relied upon to prevent the war was that Russia had* no generals, *none at least capable* of planning a campaign, *which, he observed, was the great talent of the Emperor Napoleon. A battle to him was altogether a secondary consideration. If he lost one today he would gain another after a few weeks; the result of the whole campaign was his great object, and of this he was always sure. I have heard that the Emperor Alexander has not much confidence in the capacity of his generals, and there is certainly, since the death of Count Kamensky, no very dazzling military reputation among them. In short, the anticipations of reflecting men here concerning the probable issue of the war are gloomy and desponding, and notwithstanding its apparent inconsistency, this melancholy foreboding is shared even by those who yet wish to accelerate the war. They are impatient to try the chance of the die, although they feel that the odds are against them.*

*I have so frequently written to you upon this subject, because the question of this peace or war must materially affect the commerce, if not the general policy, of the United States. The*

*effect of French intrusion upon the Baltic is already very considerable; the next year it will in all probability be much greater.*[1] The four American vessels which I mentioned to you as having been taken at the beginning of this season by a French privateer and carried into Dantzig have all been condemned at Paris, ostensibly as English property, but really as I am informed, on account of their destination, and at the express desire of General Rapp to contribute to the funds necessary for the new fortifications of that city. The privateers at the passage of the Sound still intercept all the American vessels coming hither, and twenty vessels bound from this port to America were detained great part of the months of August and September in Elsineur Roads, by the fear of these privateers, which were anchored close beside them there, ready to sally out immediately after them to carry them back as prizes.[2] *The British policy of leaving the coast clear for their privateers will serve their purpose better than the blockade of the port of Elsineur.*[3]

[1] Cypher.

[2] "The [French] Consul [Lesseps] was very busy preparing dispatches to go by the Ambassador's courier. He told me he had dined a few days since in a company where there were a great number of Americans, and said he was convinced there were a great number of real Americans from the United States here, though there were people enough here ready to say they were all English. I entered into details of conversation with him to convince him that almost all the Americans that came here loaded were bona fide from America, and with cargoes of American property. He said he gave full credit to my statement, and should report accordingly to his government. He showed me his account of the vessels arrived at Cronstadt, of which there were 88 Americans with cargoes and 33 in ballast. There were only 11 with cargoes under other colors, all of which he told me he held unquestionably for English property. Every vessel loaded at Gothenburg he considered as English property. I noticed the state of the exchange between this country and England, and the fact that no insurance could be obtained in England upon goods shipped for this country, as proof that very little English property was really imported here, which he allowed. This last fact, he said, he had not known before, and that he should not fail to avail himself of it." September 28, 1811. Ms. Diary.

[3] Cypher.

The official accounts from the Moldavian army come down to the first of September. The Turks had taken possession of an island upon the Danube near Widdin, from which they were dislodged on the 25th of August with the loss of their artillery. This and another small skirmish of foraging detachments a few days before are all that has been done in that quarter, where the campaign may be considered as at an end. Of the peace which was so confidently anticipated, we now hear nothing. I am with great respect, etc.

## TO JOHN ADAMS

ST. PETERSBURG, 14 October, 1811.

DEAR SIR:

. . . . . .

I endeavor as much as possible to be your disciple in the opinion that a navy would remedy many of our evils.[1] But there are two sides to that question, and I have not definitely settled in my mind whether the evil or the remedy is the worst. If a navy, a respectable navy, could be formed, and at the same time a steady peace with England could be preserved, it would certainly tend to raise our national character in the estimation of the rest of the world. But if, even in our present state of impotence upon the ocean, the commercial rivalry, jealousy and fears of England are pushing her into a war with us for the sole purpose on her part of arresting and reducing our prosperity, how much more inevitable would it be if her rancorous feelings were envenomed

[1] "Our country has tried and will try every measure but the right one. The navy, the navy, a navy is the grand desideratum, and the *unum necessarium*. In private it is acknowledged, but nobody dares avow it in public." *John Adams to John Quincy Adams*, February 22, 1811. Ms.

by the sight of an American navy, which she could take or destroy. It would be a perpetual stimulus to England for making war against us, stronger than all those by which she is now instigated put together. Nor would it be possible, for us, even with the most liberal appropriations for a navy, to create one in half a century of uninterrupted and unremitting effort, capable of coping with hers. If she could not endure the thought of our commercial profits, all of which ultimately flow into her own lap, how much more eagerly would she seize every occasion to annihilate any naval force which should be rising to an aspect which could give her a moment of alarm. The only possible chance we could have for growing into strength at sea would be a time when we should be upon good terms with her, and when we might seem to be building for a contest against her enemies. The affair of the *Chesapeake* and that of the *Little Belt* have shown us samples of the *questions* that are apt to arise between armed ships, and of a very compendious manner of settling such questions to which, in certain tempers of mind, they are no less prone. Multiply tenfold or fifty the number of our frigates and send them out to meet British men of war on the high seas, and you will have ten or fifty such questions to one that occurs now. Convoy questions, salute questions, first hailing and first answering questions, with a burning match at the touch hole of every gun in both ships, and then solemn official reports on each side charging the other with having fired the first gun. I cannot disguise to myself the tendency of a navy to embroil us with Great Britain, arising from the very nature of the thing. Nor can I contemplate without anxious concern any instrument so powerful, the character of which must be to produce and multiply such collisions.

As to our internal policy, the argument for a navy is liable

to much controversy too. Its expense must be an important object. The annual cost of the British navy now exceeds twenty millions sterling. A tenth part of that sum equals the whole expenditure of our national government. Ten millions of dollars a year would give us just such a navy as I think the English would for its own sake choose to destroy. With ten millions of dollars a year we should have about half the force which the same sum pays for in England. There is no department of the English government in which the nation is so outrageously plundered as in the navy. Our nation would be plundered about twice as much as the English, for in the first place we must double pay both officers and men. The officers, because we must take them from occupations of which profit is the soul, and must indemnify them for the advantages they give up for the service. The men, because we have no power of impressment, because their engagements must be voluntary, and because the public to obtain them must *outbid* the wages of the merchant service. Then the navy contracts, and the navy agents and the pursers, the multitude of electioneering canvassers to be provided for in the seaports, the riggers and caulkers, and ship carpenters and mastmakers, and victuallers and poulterers, and all the little world who have something to do in fitting out a ship, and who have also something to do upon all our election days, will too easily discover the art of swelling their bills for work done or articles furnished, with an invisible item for their services in the *political* department. And when money comes to be wanted by the public to pay for all these expenses, the bank directors and stockholders who can alone command it will find out and prove that eight per cent, or perhaps ten, is the most moderate interest for which it can possibly be obtained. Something too much of this we have seen in our small experience. If my friend

Quincy had an oration to make upon the subject, it would afford an ample field for his eloquence and his wit.

But all this is political heresy. That without a navy we shall never have any security for our commerce, and shall be contiuually injured and insulted by foreign nations, is beyond all question. Now comes a new point to be mooted. Is our commerce worth the cost and sacrifices which must be made to protect it? To commerce, considered as *trade*, as an honest calling affording employment, subsistence, and fortune to a portion of the community, favor and even protection are due to a certain extent. To commerce considered as the *broker* and *carrier* of agriculture (for Mr. Jefferson's epithet of *handmaid* I do not approve) still higher importance and more extensive protection is due. To commerce as the purveyor of most of the comforts and enjoyments of our physical existence, as holding the great link of human association between the remotest regions of the earth, as furnishing the great vehicle of civilization and science, the most distinguished favor and most liberal protection ought to be given. But from all that I have seen and all that I have heard and read of commerce, in this or in former ages, in our own or in any other quarter of the globe, commerce is the very last constituent interest in the nation upon which I would bestow power. Mercury made a very good messenger, but he would have been a detestable master. It is very obvious however that a large navy would not only increase the relative weight and influence of the commercial interest in our country, but would arm it with a power which would be extremely formidable to the whole. I will not, however, turn my letter into a dissertation. I will only add the hope that we shall not suffer ourselves to be entrapped into a war while we have no navy. Congress I learn are soon to meet. They must take care to steer clear of war. Your friend

Timothy has been sweating to prove that the war is already begun. How Commodore Rodger's story will turn out upon his Court of Inquiry remains to be seen.[1] But the British government is not so ready for a war with the United States as Timothy calculated.

Mr. Barlow[2] has arrived in France, but brought us no letters. I have seen however Boston newspapers to the tenth of August. Mr. R. Smith's vindication of his resignation looks as if it would turn out not much better than that of a predecessor in his office.[3] If he made his explosion with the view to take a higher station in the third party, which we hear is putting in a claim to the next Presidency, he was not well advised. I fancy by this time he wishes he had taken the *Siberian exile*. For my own part I am not displeased that he chose to stay at home, for I should have been in rather a ridiculous situation spending the winter here as a private gentleman which I must have done, and with a successor seated in my place. But I would rather have submitted to that than that he should expose himself and his country as he has done by his pamphlet.

All the accounts which we get from America lead me to be more and more contented with that dispensation of Providence which prevented our return to the United States the present year. I should probably have mingled, whether willingly or not, in some electioneering projects from which it is my wish to be entirely disconnected. They will have blown over by the next summer, and on my return I shall have the prospect of at least some little quiet.

We have resided during the summer months in the country. Last week we returned to the city where we are settled

[1] He commanded the *President* in the action with the *Little Belt*.

[2] He had arrived at Cherbourg, September 6.

[3] Edmund Randolph.

until next June. What is then to be our destination still depends upon the pleasure of the President of the United States.

The political state of affairs on the European continent is equivocal and threatening. But on this head I can say little. I mentioned to my brother not long since a proof of curiosity in the French police department to read my letters. I have just had another. Mr. J. S. Smith wrote me a few lines from London in disgust, and addressed to me a small packet of English newspapers. The person who had charge of them happened to land in France. These letters for me were taken from him by the police at Havre and sent to Paris. Mr. Russell on hearing of it wrote to the Duke de Bassano, claiming my letters. The Duke de Bassano sent him two, assuring him that the Duke de Rovigo (Minister of the Police) had found no more *for me*. Mr. Russell has sent them to me. They were sealed but had apparently been opened. What became of the third letter or what it contained I am not informed. I suppose it is in the paradise of fools. Perhaps the foolish forgery just at that time published in the English papers, and in which my name was used, sharpened the Duke of Rovigo's optics. At any rate I have mementos enough for discretion, and so I bid you adieu.

## TO GEORGE WILLIAM ERVING

St. Petersburg, 15 October, 1811.

Dear Sir:

Mr. S. A. Wells [1] arrived here and delivered to me last Saturday your favor of 17 September. That of the 6th of the same month, which you mention as having sent by the

[1] Samuel Adams Wells.

way of Sweden, is not yet here. "Dear" as it may be to me, I should be very sorry that any good natured friend on its way should have conceived the idea of sparing me the expense of its postage. Your passport and dispatch made it necessary for Mr. Wells to come in person to St. Petersburg, which perhaps was not his intention. And now he is here he could not get away again in less than five or six weeks, unless I procured for him a courier's passport to return. By the police laws here no foreigner can either come into the country or go out of it without a passport issued by the Russian government, which can seldom be obtained without a lapse of several weeks. There is an exception for mariners and persons named in ship's papers, and also for couriers; but the latter to go away must have a passport from the Department of Foreign Affairs. So I have asked for a courier's passport for Mr. Wells, as charged with dispatches for you, and I must ask you to take this for the dispatches.

Mr. Wells brought me also the Boston newspapers to 10 August. I had seen Mr. R. Smith's pamphlet copied into the *Aurora*. The first part of the *Review* attributed to Mr. Barlow an extract from Colvin's *conflicting agitation* for the credit of two *brouillon* letters, and a part of Mr. Smith's reply, complaining of the illiberality of contesting a gentleman's abilities.

The pamphlet had excited in my mind questions concerning Mr. Smith's character of more importance in my own estimation than any question of capacity. It is always rather an awkward thing for a man to have the affirmative of a controversy to maintain, when the point at issue is his own talents, and I did not think much of Mr. Smith's *logic*, when he urged the offer of the Russian mission as a circumstance for closing all argument as to the President's opinion

respecting his intellectual powers.[1] But my logic did not see how Mr. Smith's pamphlet could be reconciled with his official duty and his official oath, which I supposed him to have taken. The review, however, seems to admit that he was not under an oath of office. If so, the offense may lose a little of its aggravation, but nothing of its essential character. If it was not perjury, it was not the less breach of trust.

It did not seem to me very wise for Mr. Smith to insist so much upon the long and unintermitted confidence which Mr. Madison had shown him during the whole period of Mr. Jefferson's administration, in the very act of showing to the world how little that confidence was deserved. Nor did I think that either sense or spirit was very conspicuous in the cause assigned for the sudden and violent transition from only *not accepting* the Russian mission, to extreme indignation at the discovery of the supposed motive for the offer. All this had some tendency to advertise unfurnished apartments in the ex-Secretary's brain; but the obvious preparation which had so long been making for this rupture, the painful and laborious hoarding of topics for future crimination which seems to have occupied all Mr. Smith's time and talents in the Department of State, opened to view certain apartments of his heart not unfurnished, but which I thought a sense of decency, if not of delicacy, should have induced him to keep closed, both from the eye and the nostril of his country. There was an acuteness and energy in the two drafted letters, for which I could not easily

[1] "It had occurred to me that he might not be disinclined to serve his country in a foreign mission, and that St. Petersburg, where there was a vacancy, might be an eligible, as it certainly was an important situation. London more so, he remarked quickly. For London, I replied, another arrangement was thought of; adding, with a view to repress miscalculations, that it was a place of discussions and negotiations, calling for appropriate talents and habits of business." Madison, in *Writings of Madison* (Rives), II. 501.

account; but the most distant suspicion never entered my head that what was in them belonged to Colvin. I knew something indeed of this man's talents, but I did not even know that he was a clerk in the Department of State.

If you should come as soon as you think to the single point of *past condemnations*, I cannot say that I should recommend very long waiting for an answer; a reasonable time, however, must be allowed, and the discussion may take more time than you anticipate before it can be either fairly closed or found *bottomless*. The principle you have assumed, and upon which you have written home that you should proceed, appears to me perfectly correct, but in its application will require a deliberate and judicious selection of the moment between precipitation and unprofitable lingering. In the choice of that moment a variety of occasional as well as permanent considerations may be combined, and which cannot at this distance be foreseen. I do not expect, however, that the pending cases will be cleared away so soon, and I have some apprehensions that the new ones which have accrued or will accrue may require our attention longer than you were aware. I presume that they will come within the object of your commission and instructions.

Mr. and Mrs. Bentzon now intend to pass part of the winter and perhaps the whole of it here. He told me some time since that he should communicate to me the object of his visit here, but he has not yet done it. His purpose is now to go from hence to Copenhagen.

The Emperor Napoleon's northern tour has occasioned some misgivings and tremulation here as well as with you. But the government is not alarmed. You doubtless knew before this all about the speech of the 15th of August. An *ukaze* has issued here for a new levy of troops, four men out of every five hundred. It will raise nearly 130,000 men.

The new obstruction at the passage of the Sound is not seen with pleasure here, and I understand the Russian minister at Copenhagen has already been instructed about it. But the annoyance that it gives here, and even to Denmark may be a motive rather for its aggravation than for its discontinuance. I believe with you that we must prohibit convoy or allow to arm. But then, at least in the two last of these cases, we must not break with Great Britain, and how can we help that? I think the next year will present an entire new scene upon the Baltic. I am, etc.

## TO THE SECRETARY OF STATE

No. 72. [JAMES MONROE]

ST. PETERSBURG, 16 October, 1811.

SIR:

All the American vessels which have arrived at Cronstadt this season are gone. Since the beginning of September none have arrived. Several which were bound here have been arrested by the French and Danish privateers at the passage of the Sound, some have been taken into Copenhagen, and some have turned back to Gothenburg. A convoy bound up the Baltic is said to have left that port on the 21st of last month, among which there were several Americans; the arrival of many of them is expected here from day to day. But if they arrive there is every prospect that they will be detained here over winter, as within one month from this day it is probable the river and the gulf of Cronstadt will be solid as marble.

You will receive information from Mr. Erving, which I presume will prove to you beyond a question, that the appearance

of these French privateers at the Sound is not an accidental thing. It has become a part of the French political system, to consider all colonial produce (under which many natural productions of the United States are included) as coming from England or being English property. And there is now another motive for encouraging these privateers; namely, that of annoying the commerce of Russia. Mr. Harris lately mentioned their appearance and the obstructions they occasion to the intercourse between the United States and Russia, in a letter to the Minister of Finances, Mr. Gourieff. *The subject was laid before the Emperor, who directed Count Romanzoff to complain of it to the Danish minister here.*

*I saw the Count yesterday and spoke to him of it again. He told me that he had written to Baron Blome (The Danish minister) by the Emperor's command concerning it, but he did not expect that it would be with much effect. For, said he, what can be done? How can Denmark herself interfere to put a stop to these proceedings? If France had no possessions bordering on the Baltic the antient ground might be taken, that it was a* mare clausum, *and that privateers should not be admitted upon it; but now France herself has ports in it, and the sea cannot be closed against her. I told him that a similar course of reasoning had induced me to spare him the trouble of a formal application from me in this case. I believed that little would be effected by any remonstrance against it long; the only practical remedy that I foresaw as likely to be resorted to by my countrymen for the future would be, to avoid the passage of the Sound altogether and look for another which they might find, with little danger of being stopped. He said he hoped many of them would take their destination to Archangel, as there would be no cause for apprehension of French in those seas.*

*He asked me if I had any late accounts from America, and particularly with regard to the prospect of a war between the*

*United States and England. I answered, that from the United States I had no news later than of the 10th of August and those merely of the public prints. It was from England, however, rather than from America, that the prospects of peace or war between those two countries were to be expected in the first instance here; and that as far as the information I had from thence could lead me to form a judgment, if I could venture to give him my private opinion, it was, that it would not come to a war, that France was taking too much pains on her part to reconcile us by such measures as those we had been speaking of, and I thought they would not be entirely without effect.*

*These enquiries still indicate the wish in the Russian government that the war between the United States and England may be avoided. It is not improbable that they may consider their own peace with France as depending much upon it. The system of the Emperor Napoleon is yet incomplete, as long as any inlet to colonial goods remains open, and he is now again renewing the attempt to prevent all commercial communication between England and Russia. The Russian commerce of* exportation *is an object of such importance not only to the nation but to the crown and to the nobility who compose the imperial councils and command in the armies that they can never consent to sacrifice it, nor would the sovereign himself, perhaps, be secure upon his throne, should he arrest entirely the circulation which feeds the source of his own revenues and of the private fortunes of all the principal nobility. But Great Britain and the United States are the only markets for this exportation still open, and so long as the peace between them continues, the ships and vessels of the United States provide the means of carriage to England as well as to America. Should, however, the war break out, the exportation to both would become much more difficult. The English being masters of the Baltic would probably not permit the American flag to appear upon it, no neutral vehicle of commerce would be*

*left, and Russia would be reduced to the alternative of sacrificing all her export trade, or of permitting it to be carried by English vessels. The first is obviously the present purpose of France; but I have suggested the causes which render compliance with it here impracticable. The second cannot be done without an avowed and formal peace with England, or at least without precipitating a war with France, which Russia is equally desirous of avoiding. It is this view of things which makes Russia take so much interest in our peace with England; nor is it one of the motives upon which France is so anxious to procure the war. The same view appears to me not less important to the United States themselves, whose policy, if I may be permitted to express an opinion, coincides entirely with that of Russia.*[1]

To show you the principle assumed by France, I beg leave to refer you to an official notification from the director of the French customs to the burgomaster of Dantzig, dated 16 August:

I hasten to inform you that the importation of colonial merchandizes, even by paying the duties fixed by the tariff of 2 October, is contrary to the views of the Emperor, and that his Majesty has formally declared that every species of colonial merchandizes which may be attempted to be introduced, from what place soever they may come, and to what country soever they may belong, must be considered as coming from England and confiscated.

*With this principle thus avowed I trust our merchants will need no additional warning to withhold their vessels from attempting to pass next Spring through the Sound. They can expect nothing but seizure and confiscation, if they fall into the hands of Frenchmen. I hope also that in deliberating upon the course of policy to be pursued with regard to England, this state of things will be clearly and explicitly understood. If we do not*

[1] Cypher.

*break with England, our trade to the Baltic will have little to apprehend from France. Congress will judge whether all our national interests are not equally secure from any possible harm she can do us. On the same contingency they will judge also whether with such principles avowed, and the practice outstripping even the principles, the shadow of an obligation upon the United States can remain to discriminate in their measures of defense, self-protection or resentment between her and her enemy.*[1] I am with great respect, etc.

## TO THE SECRETARY OF STATE

No. 73. [JAMES MONROE]

ST. PETERSBURG, 26 October, 1811.

SIR:

The angry and threatening state of the political relations between Russia and France has naturally excited great disquietude in the Prussian government. The rumor mentioned in my letters No. 62 and 63, that the king of Prussia had been admitted as a member of the Rhenish confederation, appears not to have been well founded. On the contrary, under the apprehension that the attack upon Russia would probably be preceded by an invasion of the Prussian territory, Prussia had thought it necessary to strengthen some of her remaining fortifications on the side of France, which France very soon noticed. An explanation of the motives for these works was desired, and an intimation of the real cause was given in answer. The French minister at Berlin was then instructed to make an explicit declaration in person to the King, that this alarm was altogether without foundation.

[1] Cypher.

That the Emperor Napoleon harbored no intention whatsoever unfriendly to Prussia, *or of hostility against Russia.* And particularly that he had no design of restoring the kingdom of Poland, but that the object of all his efforts would be the pursuit of the war against England, and the subjugation of the Peninsula. And the inference that Prussia was requested to draw from all this was, that any further expenditures of her resources upon the projected fortifications were unnecessary and inexpedient. This declaration in its precise terms was transmitted to Baron Schladen, the Prussian minister here, and a few days since was by him communicated *in extenso* to the Chancellor, Count Romanzoff. It was accompanied by an offer of the *mediation* of Prussia, to effect an accommodation of the differences between France and Russia. The answer to which, in substance has been, that the nature of the objects upon which a variance between Russia and France subsists is so inconsiderable, that it will not require the intervention of a third party to effect its conciliation.

Such is the official style of communication of the two empires, respecting their situation and purposes in regard to each other, several weeks after the Emperor Napoleon's discourse to the Russian ambassador on the 15th of August. The substance of it is no more than an intimation of France to Prussia to discontinue her fortification, and a refusal of Russia to accept the tender of a Prussian mediation. Neither of these events is calculated to diminish the probabilities of an approaching war.

The tone, the language, and the substance of the birthday speech, all appear to disclose an intention to intimidate; and the circumstances of it having been spoken in the hearing of the Austrian ambassador, as well as of two others was doubtless not unintended. The official circular account of

this conversation, drawn up the next day and transmitted to the French ministers abroad by the Duke of Bassano, differs from the speech itself only as it omits all the threats and offensive personalities with which it abounded. These would have been useless and improper in the dispatch. But it can hardly be supposed they were without their purpose in the real speech. It may be observed that there was a repeated complaint that Russia had evaded giving *explanations*, but without saying of what. If it referred merely to the detachment of the *five* divisions, from the Moldavian army, to reënforce the Russian line in Poland, that cause of dissatisfaction has been removed; *but I have reason for believing that something more than explanations has been and still is demanded of Russia. The English newspapers have contained articles from St. Petersburg asserting that this demand was nothing less than the admission of a French garrison into the Russian ports upon the Baltic to superintend the effectual execution of the* continental system. *Probably this statement is not entirely without foundation. Of Riga in particular it may be true. But as yet no symptom of a disposition to comply with this demand is discoverable here. An inflexible resolution to reject it is supposed to be taken even if its only alternative should be war.*[1]

A proposition has been submitted by the Chancellor to the Imperial Council, for authorizing by law, a free commerce with the Caracas, in consequence of certain overtures to that effect, said to have been made from thence.[2] Although it had been previously presented to the consideration of the Emperor, and favorably viewed by him, it met with strong and unexpected opposition in the Council, where it was if

[1] Cypher.

[2] The independence of Venezuela was proclaimed July 14, 1811, but was not recognized by Spain until 1845.

not ultimately rejected, at least indefinitely postponed last Monday. The opposition to the measure arose from an idea that it would involve the principle of acknowledging the independence of that province, and so it was no doubt intended by Count Romanzoff. His views upon this subject so far as he thought proper to disclose them to me have been heretofore reported in several of my letters to you. The Russian policy as contemplated by him is to favor the independence of the provinces of South America which belonged to Spain. Declarations of a similar disposition were made nearly two years ago by France. How far they may suit the present purposes of the French government is perhaps questionable, but the Count did not expect any difficulty from that quarter. There appears to be some embarrassment in the conduct of the English government relative to this question. They do not seem to be very sanguine in the hope that the Spanish colonies will ever be restored to their former state of dependence upon their mother country, and they are not a little anxious to grasp at a share, if they must despair of the monopoly of their trade. But nothing less than complete restoration can satisfy the pretensions of the Cortes; and the bare intimation from England, that a compromise with the insurgents would be expedient, and especially that England must herself be allowed to trade with them, has produced dissensions between these allies, which they cannot conceal from the knowledge of the world. *It might be the wish of Count Romanzoff that Russia should be the first or among the first to recognize this new power, and the opposition in the Council, produced it may be presumed from views of policy coinciding with those of England more than the Chancellor has upon any object of general importance been wont to do.*[1]

[1] Cypher.

The Turkish army under the command of the Grand Vizier has been defeated by General Kutuzoff. A courier arrived the night before last with the account, but the details of the victory have not yet been made public. It is supposed by some persons here that the new English mission to Constantinople will contribute to accelerate the peace between Russia and the Porte, but I believe this to be mere political speculation. I am with much respect, etc.

## TO THOMAS BOYLSTON ADAMS

St. Petersburg, 21 October, 1811.

. . . . . .

Mr. Russell goes (or rather by this time is gone) to take charge of public affairs of the United States in England until the appointment of a minister. I have great regard and esteem for Mr. J. S. Smith, who was several months with us here, and whose amiable disposition and lively character made him an universal favorite. When I learned that he was to be our chargé d'affaires in England, though I thought him well qualified for that office, I was a little surprised that a situation of such importance and responsibility should have been assigned to so young a man, and with so little experience. At present I am persuaded that the change has not been occasioned by any deficiency on his part in the performance of his duty, and I hope it has not necessarily been connected with the misconduct of his uncle. With Mr. Russell I have been in correspondence during his residence at Paris, and it has been a source of much valuable information. I expect to renew this correspondence with him in England. If, as I now expect, we should return home next summer, it will be too late to ask you to write to us under cover to him.

But probably that channel will be the shortest and the surest for the transmission of letters between the United States and Russia.

Mr. Barlow will be obliged to wait, I presume, until the Emperor Napoleon's return to Paris before he can enter upon business, or even be recognized in his diplomatic character. When acknowledged, I am not very sanguine that he will be able to accomplish anything useful or honorable to his country. He will have according to a French proverbial expression *to feed upon adders*. But as I hope he is authorized to assume with the French government a tone becoming the dignity of the nation that he represents, and if, as I trust, he is not to be cajoled by unmeaning phrases and hypocritical compliments, he may do honor to himself and refute, as Armstrong refuted, the calumnies of those who have so long charged us with subserviency to France. The manner in which Armstrong's letter of 10 March, 1810, was received by all Europe as well as all America, proves to perfect demonstration that the full assertion of our rights, in a style of firmness and intrepidity, is the most useful as well as the most spirited policy.

I hope that Congress will take special care not to break into a war with England. It is probable, and I might say almost inevitable, that the British system of policy which has been so full of outrage to our rights will soon undergo a great change. It is now persevered in only from passion, obstinacy, and defiance of opposition. It is already recoiling upon England herself with such increasing pressure as must ere long be intolerable. I have reasons which I cannot fully explain to you for writing, that a war may still be avoided; but one equivalent to all the rest is that it would reduce us to a state of great dependence upon France. It would draw us into the vortex of the French political system,

from which it might take a century to extricate us again, or by a reaction equally pernicious, it would throw us back as an appendage to the British system, and plunge us headlong into the ruin towards which that is so rapidly tending.

. . . . . .

## TO WILLIAM EUSTIS

ST. PETERSBURG, 26 October, 1811.

DEAR SIR:

Since I wrote and forwarded the letter of which the inclosed is a press copy, Mr. R. Smith's pamphlet as extracted or copied into the *Aurora* has come to knowledge and has removed some part of the obscurity of which I then complained. But as some of the topics discussed in the pamphlet are the same with those touched upon in my letter, and as Mr. Smith professes to have avowed sentiments respecting certain public measures similar to those which I have avowed to you, I think it now proper to assure you that at the time when I wrote the original of the inclosed I knew not the existence of his pamphlet, and had no suspicion either that he intended to publish or that those sentiments had been entertained by him. I say this, because considering as I do the publication of his pamphlet as a breach of trust, if the coincidence of his arguments upon the measures with my opinions had not of itself been enough to stagger my confidence in my own mind, it would at least have led me to hesitate in expressing even confidentially ideas and views which I believed him to be proclaiming for the purposes very different from those of the public welfare. Of the Review of the pamphlet which appeared in the *National Intelligencer* I have seen only the introductory number, but

Mr. Smith's reply on the subject of the grant to Mr. Erving has been published entire in the English newspapers where I have read it.[1] I am therefore still uninformed of the reasoning upon which the opposite view of policy relating to our affairs with France is supported, and know not how far it might convince me of the inaccuracy of the opinions I had held and which in the inclosed letter I had suggested to you. Having now an opportunity by Commodore Bainbridge, upon the safety of which I can rely, in giving you freely my present opinions I feel it as a duty to embrace the occasion committing my sentiments to you in the most entire confidence and with the assurance that if they are incorrect they will have no improper influence and if just that they will not, as in factious times so often happens, be perverted to purposes more pernicious than error itself.

Of the reception which Mr. Barlow has met from the French government and of the instructions under which he

[1] "I have seen in an English newspaper the late Secretary's reply to the Review, but the Review itself, excepting the first number, has not reached me. Whether there has been any reply to Colvin's disclosure I have not learnt. The Secretary has been unlucky in calling for the umpirage of the people, he speaks of it as a duty and after setting at nought his real duties there was some pretence for him to assume an imaginary one. He began by alleging self justification as his motive. In the reply he avows the character of an accuser against Mr. Madison and of his twelve charges returns only to that concerning you. It was the only thing in his whole budget which appeared to me in the first instance to need some explanation upon the part of Mr. Madison. I suppose it has been given in the Review. Taken all together the case made out in the pamphlet was pitiful. I thought it as you did a clumsy mimicry of Hamilton, conducted with more popular *Pandarism* but with infinitely inferior talents. Some of the last newspapers threaten a book too from General Armstrong. What can be *his* motive or pretext? He went off with such flying colors from France that I had better hopes of him. He will need no Colvin to manage his weapons, but I hope and trust that if he follows the Secretary's track, he will not be more successful in the chase." *To George William Erving*, October 29, 1811. Ms. Madison states the facts as to Erving in his letter to Jefferson, July 8, 1811, in *Writings of Madison* (Rives), II. 514.

is to act I am yet equally ignorant. The situation of his immediate predecessor (Mr. Russell) has been irksome, and I do not think his own will be agreeable. That good words in abundance may be given is possible; but it is my belief not only that nothing like satisfaction for past injuries will be obtained but that no material modification will be made of a system as hostile to the United States in everything but the name as declared war. And that in the full and unyielding execution of this system a tone of insolent dictation to the United States will be officially maintained with regard to their mode of resenting the outrages of England. The object of all this will be to entangle us in an English war, and I cannot dissemble the wish that it may have the directly contrary effect of preserving us from it.

I have read also in the English newspapers some late lucubrations of Mr. Pickering to prove his old fable of a compact between Mr. Jefferson and Napoleon that the United States should go to war with England. If Pickering believes this himself, it is by means of the process with which Shakespeare says a man works himself up "to credit his own lye;" but Pickering is cunning enough to see that a war with England may be unavoidable, and *then* he thinks to batter down the administration with this foolish tale of its having been concerted with France beforehand. But though none but a political idiot or a political fanatic could believe any President of the United States to be seeking a war with England (unless by a species of corruption which even Pickering dares not insinuate), yet it is unquestionably true that France had been doing everything in her power to draw us into that war, just as England on her side though in a more blundering manner has been urging us to a war with France. Now France has within the last eighteen months been playing her game with so much address that I sometimes fear it

will ultimately prove successful, and if Congress during the approaching session are not completely upon their guard in this respect, we may find ourselves involved in that war without an adequate attainable object in view at its issue, and in a state of fivefold dependence upon the caprices, the insolence and the rapacity of France.

The general *result* of my reflections as to the *principle* which I could wish Congress to adopt, and which I flatter myself may still preserve us from war, is that of placing the two powers again upon precisely the same footing. That is, if the non-importation is continued against England, to apply it, or a measure of equal force, to France; or if no measure restrictive of intercourse with France is adopted, to remove that upon the intercourse with England. The great question about colonial trade is already annihilated by the situation of South America. The Orders in Council must soon be given up, for they recoil already so much upon England herself that she will not much longer endure them. The practice of impressment is the only ineradicable wound which, if persisted in, can terminate no otherwise than by war; but it seems clearly better to wait the effect of our increasing strength and of our adversary's more mature decay, before we undertake to abolish it by war. For as I have no hesitation in saying that at the proper period I would advise my country to declare a war explicitly and distinctly upon that single point, and never afterwards make peace without a specific article expressly renouncing forever the *principles* of impressing from any American vessel, so I should think it best to wait until the time shall come, and I think it not far distant, when a declaration to that effect would obtain the article without needing the war.

It would require a longer letter than I can flatter myself you would have patience to read, to develop all the considera-

tions upon which these opinions are founded. I submit them to you without reserve, at the same time repeating that they are all subordinate to the inclination and duty of supporting whatever course of policy the constitutional authority of our country shall after due deliberation deem it most advisable to pursue. I am etc.

## TO JOHN ADAMS

St. Petersburg, 31 October, 1811.

Dear Sir:

In the month of June last Mr. Myers Fisher, Junior, of Philadelphia, who is established here as a partner of a commercial house, called upon me with a gentleman who had just arrived with a vessel and cargo of which he was the owner, and whom he introduced to me by the name of Mr. David, of Philadelphia. I thought this gentleman a total stranger to me, and was a little surprised when he said to me, "Sir, you and I are very old acquaintances with each other. Do you not recollect a boy by the name of David who was one of your school fellows at Mr. Le Cœur's, at Passy, in 1778?" "I recollect two boys of that name who were brothers, born in London of French parents, and who had been sent over to France for their education." "Well, sir, I am the younger of those two brothers;" and then he told me several anecdotes of occurrences at the school which had as completely escaped my memory until he reminded me of them as his own person. I excused myself as well as I could for not having had a memory so retentive as his, but the passage from *twelve* to forty-five years of age accomplishes a metamorphosis in one's looks, which it requires something more than memory to trace back. It was remarkable that

this was the second since I have been here in which I have been recognized by schoolmates of Le Cœur's pension. The other was a Mr. Rudolphe, an engineer, whom I had more irretrievably forgotten than Mr. David. For even now, after he brought circumstances to my mind which I do remember, I can recall no trace either of his person or his name. I have not been well pleased with myself to find that my schoolmates of that period have so much better memories than mine, and I have set all the usual casuistry of self-love in motion to account for it in a manner which may spare me all the mortification of the discovery.

But the occasion upon which I mention Mr. David to you is, that after having passed the summer here, he is now going to Gothenburg, intending to return hence either directly or through England to Philadelphia, and it is by him that I shall take the opportunity of forwarding this letter. It is already the third that has occurred since the navigation directly from Cronstadt has been closed, and I hope to have several others in November and perhaps December. There is, however, a very troublesome, and at this season a very dangerous, water passage over the gulf of Bothnia between this place and Gothenburg, and the winter has already declared itself here with such severity that the River Neva is completely frozen over.

Since I wrote you last we have had no further news from America, and expect none of any material importance until the session of Congress. We hear of nothing but the violence of political parties concentrated in the state of Massachusetts and especially in the town of Boston. Old Hillhouse used to say seven years ago, that there was no remedy for our evils but "*a little surgical operation;*" and it was he, and a number of heads in Connecticut and Boston about as wise and comprehensive as his, who then seriously formed the project

for dividing the Union, of which at the last session of Congress Mr. Quincy condescended to become the herald. It was on the very same Lilliputian scale of policy too, because Louisiana and the western states would soon be able to outvote New England in Congress. I had settled it in my mind long before that time, that this project would never be carried into execution, but by *treason* and *rebellion*, and that those were the greatest of two evils, in comparison with the chance of New England's being occasionally outvoted in Congress. To my mind, therefore, the bare intimation of what Mr. Quincy seriously avowed in Congress, and what Hillhouse hinted by the jocose figure of an amputation, contained these two crimes, *treason* and *rebellion*, as completely as in the physical world the grub obscene contains the wriggling worm. I do not imagine that either Hillhouse or Quincy ever pursued their own reflections so far as to be brought to this conclusion, though Quincy by his "violently if they must" has admitted that the division may cost a *civil war*, the chances of which I suppose he will not deny might, if unsuccessful, finish by giving it the name of rebellion. Such however was my conclusion, that individual *treason* and collective *rebellion* were necessarily implied in the execution of the scheme for dividing the Union; and the system of conduct uniformly pursued by the party which first conceived that design has uniformly confirmed me in the opinion which *I* had formed upon a consideration of it *a priori* as a mere theoretical speculation.

It seems to me that there were *littleness* and contraction stamped upon the very conception that the American Union must be dissolved, because the New England interest might be outvoted in Congress. There was, indeed, no New England interest clear or strong enough to unite its own representatives in their votes. But admitting that there had been,

or that in future there might be, I saw no indication that it would be without its proper and reasonable influence in the national councils, nor could I possibly discover any interest which would not suffer more by the natural and inevitable collisions of independent and disconnected bordering nations, having no common deliberative principle of association, than it could while they were united under one and the same system of legislation.

As the conception of dividing the Union appeared to me little and narrow, I could not avoid assuming it as a measure of the minds by which it was entertained; and as I thought the execution of the project would on the contrary require minds of a very enlarged and capacious character, I did not think the persons so ready to undertake this mighty work exactly calculated to carry it through. I therefore believed that it would ultimately prove unsuccessful, though probably not until after the experiment of a *civil war*. What and whom a civil war might in its progress bring forth, I could not foresee; but judging from past and present experience I supposed a Jeroboam, a Julius Caesar, a Cromwell, or some such ferocious animal, who might or might not unite the country again under one government. If he did, it must be *military* and *arbitrary*. If he did not, it would be because another tyrant like himself would head another state of a similar description, to feed between them a perpetual state of future war between the different sections that now compose the Union. It was possible that instead of two such wild beasts, the nation when once split up might produce an indefinite number of them, and monarchies, and oligarchies, and democracies, might arise as among the states of ancient Greece, and the more they multiplied the more materials would they furnish for future war. Now in all these prospects of future times, grounded on the assumed

principle of dividing the Union, I did see chances of splendid fortunes for individual avarice and ambition, which our present simple republican and federative government does not and cannot hold out, but at the expense of blood and treasure, and freedom and happiness to the great mass of the nation in all its parts, from which the hand of a parricide would shrink with compunction.

From the frequency with which I return to this subject in my letter to you and to others of my friends which will be seen by you, may be judged how much it occupies my thoughts, and how deeply it affects my feelings. It enters into most of my meditations upon history, upon government, and even upon the poetry that I read. Marmion, and the Minstrel, and the Lady of the Lake, have no moral to me but to show the consequences of dividing states which nature admits of being united. The picture of border wars is a memento to me of what awaits us, if we ever yield to that senseless and stupid call for division, which I have so long heard muttered in my own neighborhood, and which Quincy has now taken trumpet to sound forth in the very sanctuary of legislation. In that *Union* is to me what the *balance* is to you, and as without this there can be no good government among mankind in any state, so without that there can be no good government among the people of North America in the state in which God has been pleased to place them.

Of ourselves we have little else to say than that we are all well. I have got into such a regular and quiet course of life, and have now so little troublesome public business to do, that my time passes smoothly away, and it would pass as happily as the condition of human nature admits but for the irresistible calls which I hear from my parents and my children. As respects myself, the interests of my family,

and the service of my country, I know not which would be most desirable, for me to remain here or to return home; but the sense of duty prescribing my return is so strong that I shall feel myself uneasy until I comply with its commands. Hitherto I have felt it altogether at the pleasure of the President, after declining the appointment to the bench. I have had motives which it is unnecessary for me to explain to you, for avoiding hitherto an explicit request to be recalled. It still remains, therefore, at the President's option. If he recalls me without such a request, I shall however be perfectly satisfied with his determination. If he authorizes me to remain here longer, I shall soon make the request which I have hitherto delayed. At all events I do hope to see you in the course of the ensuing year, and to take upon me that imperious duty of superintending the education of my sons.

I pray you to assure them of my constant affection, and my mother of my unalterable duty, with my kind remembrance to all the branches of the family, and particularly to my sister.

## TO THE SECRETARY OF STATE

No. 74. [JAMES MONROE]

ST. PETERSBURG, 2 November, 1811.

SIR:

The Winter has set in earlier this season than has been known with one exception since the foundation of this city. The bridges were taken away on the 27th of October. The floating masses of ice became consolidated and fixed on the 29th, and the river has been passable for foot passengers

from the 31st. The last American vessel which sailed from Cronstadt for the United States was the *Dolphin*, Captain Latham, bound to New York. She sailed October 15th and has despatches on board from me. Since then I have twice had opportunities of writing by Americans going to embark from Gothenburg, and now avail myself of a third. If the severity of the season should continue proportioned to that of its commencement, that passage will itself soon be no longer practicable.

Since the departure of the *Dolphin* seven other vessels under American colours have arrived, one of which the *Monticello*, Christopher Sall, master, came with forged papers, and has been seized. The rest will be obliged to remain here over winter. The whole number of those that have entered the port of Cronstadt with our flag this year has been 139, four of which have been seized for coming with false papers.

I have occasionally mentioned to you in the course of the summer how many of the adventurers in these voyages would suffer, by the glutting of the markets with the articles which constituted their cargoes. But in the latter part of the season an outlet of exportation of the same articles was found, by land, both to the Austrian and Prussian territories, so that there is already a great and increasing demand here for almost all those articles, which a few weeks ago scarcely bore any price. Among the multitudes of Americans who have crowded hither upon commercial speculation many have been unfortunate merely from ignorance of the course of commerce peculiar to this country, and from their impatience to effect their sales too quickly. The additional duties of impost laid upon the articles, under the tariff of the present year, and the necessity of paying them within a short term also contributed to force the sales, and to in-

crease the profits of the merchants here who purchased from the importers. The only article which has been little affected in price has been cotton, which being subject to a light duty has been more easily preserved from a forced sale, and remains in greater quantities in the hands of the original adventurers.

*How long this is* [three groups of cipher noted as in error and undeciphered]. *Russia and Austria will be suffered to remain open is extremely doubtful. That the English have participated to a considerable extent in this commerce is more than probable. In many cases they have made a legitimate use of our flag, by freighting vessels entitled to it. Besides the forgeries that have been detected here there may have been some at what are called the out-ports, which have been more successful in escaping discovery. The abolition of the Hamburg, Lübeck, Bremen, Pappenburg and Oldenburg flags has much increased the necessity under which the English have found themselves of resorting to that of the United States to carry their merchandise, and the success of the present year will certainly enlarge the scale upon which the business will be done the next. The land passages to Austria and Prussia remain open; but this new traffic has already excited the attention and jealousy of France. French commissioners have already been stationed at the frontier between Polangen and Memel who inspect, take minutes of every package that passes and report them to the French government at Paris. The vigilance of the French consul here, and even of the ambassador, has been stimulated by new and special orders to report to all the vessels which arrive and sail—the particulars of their cargoes—the seizures and confiscations, and, in short, all the minutiæ of the custom house. Preparations are already making for privateering along the whole line of the Baltic coast, from Holstein to Dantzig, and we have already the evidence that they will be countenanced in the*

*indiscriminate capture of every loaded merchant vessel, coming or going. All this however will avail but little, if the peace between the United States and England is preserved, and the land passages from Polangen to Memel, and from Radsiwiloff to Brody remain open. It is to be expected therefore that an effort will be made to stop them. Should it succeed, the trade of this place will be worse next year than it has been the present. Should it fail, the same trade will exceed everything that has yet occurred, and the water-carriers will in a great measure be the Americans.*[1]

A second courier has arrived from the Moldavian army, with a further report from the commander in chief, General Kutuzoff. The Grand Vizier and his army had not yet capitulated, but it is expected that they could not hold out many days; being surrounded and in extreme want of provisions. There had been no general action. The Grand Vizier's camp on the right bank of the Danube was on the second of October attacked and taken by a Russian corps under Lieutenant General Markoff. But the Grand Vizier himself had crossed the Danube with a force of nearly forty thousand men and was encamped on the left bank. General Markoff with a corps of about six thousand men crossed the Danube to attack the Grand Vizier's camp, and with his batteries took possession of the heights under the protection of which the Turks had crossed the river to this side. Their communication with the opposite bank is cut off, and all the boats in which they had effected the passage are taken by the Russians. In the surprize of the Grand Vizier's camp it is stated that the Turks left more than fifteen hundred dead upon the field, and about three hundred prisoners. Eight pieces of cannon, twenty-two standards, a truncheon of the Aga of the Janisaries, and a quantity of powder and ammunition

[1] Cypher.

fell into the hands of the victors. Many persons of distinction are among the prisoners. The loss on the side of the Russians consisted of nine men killed and forty wounded. Such is the official report. . . .

## TO THOMAS BOYLSTON ADAMS

St. Petersburg, 6 November, 1811.

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Congress are already in session and probably before you receive this letter will have taken some decisive step to fix the state of our relations with Europe. But I trust that step will not have been taken without a knowledge of the manner in which France is treating us, nor without a cool and deliberate consideration of the effect which this treatment ought to have upon our course of policy. You know my sentiments with respect to the non-importation act of the last session. It passed upon the conviction that the Berlin and Milan decrees had been effectually and bona fide repealed. In all the proceedings of France on that subject I had seen a character which was far from deserving the discrimination which was then made on our part between her and her enemy, but I did and do still respect most highly the motive upon which the act was adopted—the sacred fulfillment of an honorable promise. At this time I think little doubt can remain upon any mind concerning the real intentions of France. The dispute whether the Berlin and Milan decrees have or have not been repealed is degenerating into a cavil upon words. Yes! as to us they have been repealed. At least I know not of any official act of the French government contrary to their declarations to that effect. But as prohibitory duties are in common sense and common reason

always equivalent to prohibition, the tariff issued cotemporaneously with the declaration that the two decrees were revoked was substantially a non-importation act, pointed directly against us. In form it certainly did not violate our neutral rights but in substance was the same thing. By *internal regulation* it made the exercise of our neutral rights impracticable with regard to the most profitable part of our commerce. It satisfied the letter but not the spirit of our prior law. If however all this be admitted it is clear that our pledge has been completely redeemed. If we promised to our loss we have made our promise good. We have now a new score of injury and outrages to take up. The depredations of the present year are not committed by virtue of the decrees of Berlin and Milan, but upon simple orders of the Emperor Napoleon that all colonial merchandises coming from whence and belonging to whom they may are to be considered as English, and coming from England, therefore to be confiscated. Surely after this it is perfectly useless to inquire whether the Berlin and Milan decrees are or are not repealed. At the same time it becomes constantly more and more evident that Napoleon is ardently desirous of a war between the United States and England, a war which would be highly propitious to his purposes which would hasten undoubtedly the ruin of England but which would either *rivet* upon us the fetters of France, or make them so intolerably galling that the feeling of our country would cast them off for the still more cruel and insufferable manacles of England. Now if there were not other reasons in abundance to deter us from a war with England, one reason equivalent to ten thousand is that he desires we should have it. For the very reason that our neutrality is the state the most unfavorable to his views I hope we shall adhere inflexibly to it. At present we may with great safety set in

substance his enmity defiance. And the most effectual way of doing it will be by placing him and his adversary again precisely upon the same footing.

Our non-importation act is of all the measures hitherto taken most seriously and severely felt by England. The course of exchange is a proof, and an unanswerable proof, of its great efficacy. It occasions no doubt many partial inconveniences in our own country, but as a defensive weapon it works so well that I should incline strongly to continuance. But I would apply it as an equivalent measure without hesitation and without delay to France. And I would assume a tone in negotiation with her which should leave no room for anybody to talk of our partiality in her favor. Armstrong's letter of the 10 of March and its effects sufficiently showed the true tone that ought to be taken with her. When I say incline to the continuance of the non-importation, I speak of course without a full knowledge of its operation at home. If that should make a repeal expedient, I think it will be difficult to substitute any measure of equal power in its stead. England besides her pauperism and her paper money is getting upon very bad terms with her allies in Sicily, in Spain and even in Portugal. She is in a great dilemma between the Cortes of Cadiz and the South American patriots of independence. This claim becomes as from day to day more entangled and she will never be able to control it. It will I flatter myself be our policy to keep ourselves cool and calm and to do nothing to involve us in the catastrophe which cannot be very remote.

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## TO THE SECRETARY OF STATE

No. 75. [JAMES MONROE]

ST. PETERSBURG, 9 November, 1811.

SIR:

I received last week a letter from Mr. David Wood, dated, at Memel, stating that he was first mate of the American ship *Hercules*, taken on the 2nd of May last, on a voyage from Charleston to St. Petersburg, by a French privateer and carried into Dantzig. That after receiving information from Captain Snow, that the ship was condemned, and an order to send the crew away, he had sent them to Pillau, where they could find no opportunity for a passage home, and had proceeded on to Memel, where he had found them in a distressed situation, and still unable to procure a passage to the United States. That there are five men besides himself (he having found means to get a passage) who are altogether destitute, and for whom he solicits relief. That he had applied to the *English* consul there, who promised them all the assistance in his power, but who of course could not support them unless authorized by me.

Mr. Harris to whom I communicated this letter, has written to Memel, giving directions that these men should be supplied according to his authority by law, and it is possible that passages may yet be obtained for them this winter, though not very probable.

The two American vessels which were taken, almost in the port of Copenhagen by a French privateer, early in August, have also been condemned at Paris, and with their cargoes have been sold at Copenhagen.

A Te Deum is to be celebrated tomorrow at the im-

perial chapel for the recent successes of the Russian arms. The Grand Vizier himself has repassed the Danube, leaving the part of his army which had crossed to the left bank, surrounded by the Russian forces, and without means of escape. In this state of things a messenger has been dispatched to Constantinople with renewed propositions of peace from the Russian commander in chief, and until his return the Turkish troops are supplied with provisions only by permission of General Kutuzoff. In the meantime an additional detachment from the Russian army has crossed the Danube, compelled a corps of Turks on that side to capitulate, and taken once more Silistria, with two thousand prisoners. It is still doubtful whether all this will produce a peace. But at least it will effectually secure to the Russians the possession of the left bank of the Danube. There will henceforth be no danger of a Turkish invasion upon the provinces of Moldavia and Wallachia. The parties are just where they were two years ago.

*The negotiations with France appear to be at a stand. There is no appearance of a better understanding between the two governments, and it is probable that a personal interview has been proposed between the two Emperors on the part of France and rejected on the part of Russia. It is not to be apprehended that they will resort to the last appeal at this season, and not much to be hoped that they will postpone it another summer.*[1] I am with great respect, etc.

[1] Cypher.

## TO THE SECRETARY OF STATE

No. 76. [JAMES MONROE]

ST. PETERSBURG, 10 December, 1911.

SIR:

A full month has elapsed since I had the honor of writing your last; during which had any opportunity occurred of forwarding dispatches to you, nothing has happened here either in relation to our own public concerns, or to the political state of this country which could have formed the subject of a communication sufficiently interesting to justify the occupation of your time. With respect to our commerce, there has been nothing to require any interposition of mine with this government. It is not from this country that any obstacles to our intercourse with it are henceforth to be apprehended. But in France, I learn that the principle has been assumed that *all* vessels sailing to or from the Baltic, are with their cargoes to be confiscated, as having navigated under the permission or protection of the British.

The application of this principle to the Swedish commerce has led to altercations between the Swedish and French governments by no means propitious to their mutual harmony. Swedish armed vessels have recaptured several vessels of that nation which had been taken by the French privateers stationed at the passage of the Sound. The French minister, Alquier, renewed his complaints so often, and in terms so strong against what he represented as the connivance of Sweden to a commercial intercourse with England, that some personal irritation appears to have arisen in the correspondence between him and the Swedish Minister of Foreign Affairs, Baron d'Engeström. It proceeded to such

lengths, that Baron Alquier finally addressed a memorial to the Prince Royal himself, declaring that he would hold no further communication with Mr. Engeström. The prince Royal sent back the memorial with an intimation that all official papers from foreign ministers must pass through the regular channel of the Minister of Foreign Affairs. Shortly afterwards Alquier was recalled by his own government, and took leave by a written note to Baron Engeström leaving a chargé d'affaires at Stockholm in his place. All this happened about two months since. Mr. Thornton has at a later date been dispatched from England upon a mission *to the Baltic*. Some of the London prints say that his destination is here, but the state of things at this court is not yet mature for his admission into Russia. Here the rumor is that his business was to negotiate with Sweden. Judging from the present symptoms exhibited by the Emperor Napoleon's *continental system*, England will very soon have no difficulty to negotiate either with Sweden or with Russia.

Prince Lubomirski, whom I have mentioned in a former letter as having been in England, has lately returned here. There remains no doubt that his visit to that country was warranted by the sanction of the Emperor Alexander, and of the British government. That he had any mission avowedly of a political nature is strenuously denied. The Prince has very large landed estates in Poland, the produce of which, consisting chiefly of grain, is rendered in a great measure worthless by the want of an issue for exportation. Almost all Poland is in the same situation. Dantzig at the mouth of the Vistula, the outlet for Poland upon the Baltic, is in the possession of France. Nothing can therefore go by that course. The other outlet, by the Black Sea, is equally choked up by the existing war between Russia and the Turks. Under this double restraint upon all commercial circulation

the great Polish landholders are severely suffering, and it aggravates the disaffection which may be supposed to exist among them. The Duke de Richelieu came here last Spring for the purpose of obtaining a free permission for the exportation of grain by the Black Sea, notwithstanding the Turkish war, and he succeeded in this object. But the Turks now prohibited in their turn, and without their consent the exportation could not be effected. Under these circumstances Prince Lubomirski was *permitted to go* to England *upon his private business*, which was to propose to supply the British (perhaps at Cadiz and Lisbon) with grain or flour from his estates in Poland, by exportation from Odessa, in return or payment for which he was content to take colonial merchandises. It was understood that the British were to undertake to obtain from the Turks the passage of the vessels upon the Black Sea and through the Dardanelles, to and from Odessa. It is also probable that the prince was authorized to obtain by the consent of the British government, a certain quantity of military stores, which were wanted for the use of the Russian army. But all this too was upon private commercial speculation. The British government were ready enough to grant all that was wished. But they were inclined to give to the whole transaction a publicity, which did not suit the views of the Russian Government, and to take Prince Lubomirski's commercial speculations for overtures of political negotiation. Mr. Liston was dispatched as ambassador to Constantinople, and Sir Robert Wilson [1] who had just published a book in honor of Russia was sent out with him. The gazettes announced that England was to mediate the peace between Russia and the Porte, and were not backward in anticipating an union of their

[1] Sir Robert Thomas Wilson, who wrote *Brief Remarks on the character of the Russian Army; Campaigns in Poland*, 1806–1807.

arms against France. The store ships were sent, not only with an affectation of notoriety, but under convoy of a sloop of war. I have informed you of the manner in which they arrived at Reval, and how they were ordered away. After lingering for some time they went, and are said to have carried off their lading as they brought it. And Russia, without waiting for the efficacy of a British mediation at Constantinople, has taken more effectual means to make peace, by defeating the Turkish armies, and by offering terms too advantageous to be refused.

There is no doubt but the negotiation for peace is very assiduously going forward at Bucharest. I am told that the Emperor Alexander now considers its conclusion as certain. About three weeks ago a courier was dispatched with his *ultimatum*, which he has no doubt will be accepted, and the general expectation is that the intelligence of the preliminaries being signed cannot be delayed beyond another week or fortnight. It is supposed nothing can disappoint this expectation, for although whatever of French influence may exist at Constantinople will be exerted to prevent the peace, it is believed that this influence itself is too much impaired to produce an unfavorable effect.

Immediately after the news of the peace shall be received Count Nesselrode is to be sent upon a special mission to Paris, with powers and instructions to settle all the differences with France, and particularly to adjust the indemnity for the Duchy of Oldenburg. But the prevailing opinion here in the diplomatic circle still is that the war will break out the next spring. At all events the commerce with England will be more freely allowed even than it has been this year. A few remaining cases of the Teneriffe ships of last year were decided last week in the Imperial Council. The sentence of confiscation was passed upon them, but it is represented

as little more than a formality to amuse the French ambassador. I have the honour to be, etc.

## TO THOMAS BOYLSTON ADAMS

ST. PETERSBURG, 22 December, 1811.

. . . . . .

This commercial phenomenon of colonial merchandises exported from St. Petersburg and Archangel into Germany, Italy and even France, is one of those singular symptoms in the disordered state of the civilized world (if it deserves to be called so) which strike superficial observers with amazement. The Emperor Napoleon has been preaching abstinence of *sugar* and *coffee* to the people of Europe, with as much zeal as the hermit Peter once preached the recovery of the Holy Sepulchre from infidels. Finding his eloquence less persuasive than that of Peter, he has invaded, conquered, incorporated, and good citied, half a dozen sovereignties of the old school, merely to teach the people abstinence of sugar and coffee. He has offered them grape sugar, turnip sugar, maple sugar, and I know not how many more sugars and coffees in proportion, as substitutes for the true sugar and coffee. He has taxed these delicious dainties beyond all endurance, and he has threatened fire and sword against whoever would not proscribe them like himself. Notwithstanding all which sugar and coffee still make their way even into France. First they went in from Holland, then from Heligoland, then from Holstein, then from Prussia, and after having been driven from all these stages they have now found a vent through the very northern extremity of Europe. This channel of colonial trade has been barely opened during the present year; but it has proved so advantageous, not only

to the individual merchants, but to the revenues, the finances, and the credit of this empire, that it will probably be continued on a much more extensive scale the next summer, unless a new war should come and break it up altogether. Napoleon has attempted partly to defeat it by authorizing the seizure and confiscation of all vessels coming into or going out of the Baltic; but his privateers will be able to catch only a very small number of the vessels which sail under the protection of English convoys, and no others will dare to make their appearance. The exportation from hence by land is to a place called *Brody*, the frontier of Austria in what was once Poland. The Emperor of Austria has *prohibited* the use of coffee in his dominions, and promises to prohibit sugar too as soon as the maple trees shall be sufficiently grown. But this deposit at Brody is not yet made illegal, and it is doubtful whether even the influence of France at Vienna will be strong enough to get it prohibited. The prospect then is that the whole continent of Europe will the ensuing year be well supplied with sugar and coffee from Russia, but it must be understood that this prospect is subject to a contingency which may totally change its appearance, that of a new war in the north of Europe. A war between the United States and England, or the entire accession of the English Regent to the throne, would also have a material influence on the aspect of affairs.

In this new state of European commerce our countrymen have hitherto been almost exclusively the *carriers* on the ocean. The business has yet been unprofitable to many of them, and taken altogether a source of loss rather than of profit. The fruit of their labors and dangers has been gathered entirely by the Russian depositaries, who got the articles for nothing when the market was glutted, and who are now selling them at enormous prices. But there are now here a

number of Americans ready to adventure in the same speculations which have proved so unsuccessful this year, and who rely upon the continuance of the land conveyance to Brody.

The demand for cotton, the third great colonial article, bears no proportion to that of the two others. The causes of which are that a great supply of it from the Levant has been opened into Italy, France and Germany, through the Illyrian provinces, and the French tariff has laid duties so much heavier upon the American cotton, that it cannot stand in the market a competition with that of the East. Another reason is that the prohibitions and the grinding duties upon cotton have not been so widely extended nor of so long continuance as upon the other articles. It has circulated more freely. The scarcity and demand of it are consequently not so great. There are probably other reasons still, of some of which I may not be aware.

One effect of this incidental result of the continental system has been that the exchange here upon Hamburg, Amsterdam, and Paris, which nine months ago was from ten to fifteen per cent below par, is now as much above it. The balance of trade which was so heavily against Russia, is now as much to her advantage. It is hardly possible however that France, perceiving this tax which she is paying to Russia, should submit to it, and if she can prevent it, she will probably not scruple at the means, though war should be among them.

A question remains whether war itself would prove a remedy to her complaints. That might depend upon its success. The scene of the first conflicts would doubtless be in Prussia and in Poland, where the approaches to hostility have been manifested by preparations and armaments and accumulations of forces on both sides for more than a year. The event of a single battle might put the very road by which

the merchandise is transported in the possession of the French army. But from the force that Russia has concentrated there she may perhaps maintain her ground more than one campaign, and even carry the war beyond her own frontiers. In that case the passage to Brody will remain free, but a peace with England which would naturally precede or immediately follow the rupture with her enemy would bring the English in again as competitors with the Americans in the market and at the same time an influence eager enough, if possible, to exclude them from it.

Such is the view of things political and commercial at the present juncture. The course of policy that it dictates to our country is *perseverance* in her system of *neutrality*. The session of Congress will doubtless be closed before you receive this letter. Nothing will I trust have been done in it to precipitate a rupture with either France or England, and I hope nothing will produce it. Both of them are still doing, as they have done, their worst against us short of involving us with them in their quarrel. But all the evil they have done us is but the dross of which that would be the ocean. They are both warring for impracticable pursuits. Let us seek only peace.

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## TO ABIGAIL ADAMS

St. Petersburg, 1 January, 1812.

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I hope and trust that Congress will have the wisdom still to preserve our country from war in which we could gain nothing and could not fail to lose something of what is worth more than all other possessions to a nation, our independence.

If between the two belligerent powers, France and England, it were possible to discern a just or honorable cause; if in their treatment of us it were possible to discern anything but jealousy, hatred, and eagerness to despoil us of all the advantages which they saw us enjoy, we have ample cause to appeal to the last resort of nations against either. Were it possible by any rational calculation to foresee that by joining either of them against the other we should be able to obtain justice for ourselves, and look back at the close of the war with satisfaction as having contended successfully for a suitable object, I should wish for war. If a profound and indignant feeling of the wrongs which both are committing against us, and the most cordial wish to see them redressed, were it at the sacrifice of more than my life, would avail instead of line of battleships and battalions, my voice should be for war, and I would strike as soon as preparation could make it prudent at the party which is most vulnerable to us, a point by no means difficult to ascertain. But "what king," says our Saviour, "going to make war against another king, sitteth not down first and consulteth whether he be able with ten thousand to meet him that cometh against him with twenty thousand." The proportion of the numbers about which we are to consult are much more unfavorable to us than those of ten and twenty thousand. They are in point of naval force scarcely ten to five hundred, and our principal object to contend for is unfortunately on the sea. Our consultation need not therefore be long. The position which is not pleasing to acknowledge, but which it behoves us well to know and to consider, is that we have not the means to protect our commerce upon the ocean against the violent injustice of England. Still less have we the means of forcing our commerce upon the continent of Europe, which with some inconsiderable exception excludes it by

prohibitions or prohibitory duties. In the present condition of the world, and it is much to be doubted whether it will ever be otherwise, that right is not worth a straw which a nation has without force to defend it. We have not force to defend our rights upon the sea, or exercise our rights upon it at the pleasure of others. So it would still be if we were at war. There is, however, a consideration in our favor which ought not to escape us. Both England and France have mounted their policy upon systems as impracticable for them to carry through as would be an attempt by us to maintain our maritime rights by force. England abuses her naval dominion by attempting to engross to herself exclusively the commerce of the world. This she never can accomplish. France heaps conquest upon conquest until she is unable to govern what she has conquered, and loses from one hand while she is grasping with another. France and England are now obviously fighting for objects which neither will ultimately obtain. Both in spite of themselves are compelled to admit our participation in commerce to a certain extent. Both, if we have patience and preserve ourselves from war, will be compelled to admit us still further. Their necessities will do more for the restoration of our rights than we could do by any exertion of our own forces.

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## TO THE SECRETARY OF STATE

No. 77. [JAMES MONROE]

ST. PETERSBURG, 12 January, 1812.

SIR:

The peace with Turkey has not yet been proclaimed, though it is still said to be as confidently expected as it was at the date of my last letter. Circumstances have indeed occurred, in themselves calculated to renew the doubts which had almost disappeared, whether this peace was so near being concluded as had been announced. The preliminaries were actually signed. But as the Grand Vizier, who was the Turkish plenipotentiary, had probably exceeded his powers, it was thought expedient, previous to the publication of the convention, to wait for its ratification from Constantinople. It was agreed that if this ratification did not arrive within a certain day, the body of Turkish troops, which had crossed the Danube, were surrounded by the Russian army, and supplied with provisions by the Russian general, should surrender themselves as prisoners of war. The limited day arrived without bringing the confirmation of the convention; and the Turks surrendered themselves according to the agreement. The desire for the conclusion of the peace was nevertheless here so strong, and the hope so sanguine, that notwithstanding this incident, it is still given out as certain. There are now accounts from Constantinople through Vienna and Paris, which assert that the proceedings of the Grand Vizier have been disapproved, and that the Sultan inflexibly rejects every idea of a peace founded upon the principle of ceding any of his provinces. It does not appear, however, that the Emperor Alexander's ulti-

matum, which was dispatched at a later date than the first arrangements between General Kutuzoff and the Grand Vizier has been rejected, and perhaps it may have met a more favorable reception from the Porte. The government here still rely upon the peace, but it is not quite so strong in the general belief of the public as it was when the negotiations commenced.

The accounts from France have a complexion still less pacific than those from Turkey. On the 20th of December the Emperor Napoleon issued a decree, conformably to an ordinance of the Senate of the same day, for a levy of 120,000 men upon the conscription of 1812, a measure which he had threatened in his conversation with the Russian ambassador, in August, and which adds greatly to the probability of a war the ensuing summer. By another incident which has lately occurred at Paris, it appears that France has taken offense at the relations still subsisting between Russia and the Prince Regent of Portugal. Mr. Labensky, who had been several years the Russian consul general in France, some months since received the appointment as Consul to Brazil. He was then here, but went to Paris with the intention of proceeding from thence to America. I have heard that a passage to the United States was offered him in the frigate *Constitution;* but that on his asking for passports from the French government they were refused upon the alleged principle, that the appointment of a Russian consul to Brazil was a breach of the treaty of Tilsit. It is at least certain that the passport was refused, and Mr. Labensky purposes returning to St. Petersburg.

An article in an English ministerial gazette asserts that an order had been issued from the British Privy Council, for the restoration of all Swedish property which had been detained in England. This has occasioned the report that

the peace between Sweden and England was concluded. In the present condition of affairs between this country and France, the disposition of Sweden is not unimportant; and the misunderstanding which the unsatiable demands of France upon Sweden, with the depredations of her pirating privateers, have excited, is at the present juncture highly satisfactory here. Sweden has added one more to the evidences already numerous, that not even a French general seated on a foreign throne can be made to sacrifice the interests of the nation to a degree sufficient to satisfy the unappeasable rapacity of France.

I have received a letter from Mr. Wells, an American citizen at Copenhagen, recommending Mr. Hugh Wilson of New York for the appointment of consul for the provinces of Livonia and Esthonia, to reside at Riga. Mr. Wells is a grandson of the late Governor Adams of Massachusetts, and a person of respectable character. I have no knowledge of Mr. Wilson, but from his recommendation. I have heard that a consul for the port of Riga had already been appointed, but have received no such advice from your Department. Hitherto the consul agency of that port and of Reval has been executed by respectable merchants of those places under appointments from Mr. Harris. I have repeatedly had the honor of suggesting to you the importance of the consular office in the ports of the Baltic at this time. That the duties of an American consul should be correctly discharged by merchants of the country is, if not utterly impossible, at least not to be expected. Not only a real American, but a person inaccessible to very alluring temptations, is indispensable to detect the frauds upon our flag, which licenses and false papers carry with them. Those frauds may be hereafter neither necessary nor profitable. But to guard against them is yet the most important, the most difficult

and the most unwelcome part of an American consul's duty.

I have also received a letter from Mr. Bourne, the consul at Amsterdam, mentioning that he had written home to solicit the appointment of consul at London, and requesting a testimonial from me in his favor. During the time that I resided in Holland Mr. Bourne appeared to me always an active intelligent and zealous public officer, but as he has been ever since then in relation with the government, in the same capacity, I trust his merits must be still better known at the Treasury Department than I could testify for them. That he is in great and urgent want of an appointment, which would be more profitable than his office at Amsterdam, he has stated to me so repeatedly, and in terms of such strong feeling that I cannot question their sincerity.

On the other hand Mr. Anderson, the consul lately appointed to Gothenburg, writes me that he is dissatisfied with the place and intends to leave it as soon as possible. . . .

I am very respectfully etc.

## TO THOMAS BOYLSTON ADAMS

St. Petersburg, 24 January, 1812.

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Others are, however, more fortunate than I am. Several of the Americans here have letters dated in November from Boston, New York and Philadelphia, and Mr. Harris the Consul brought me the day before yesterday a slip from the New York gazette of 16 November, containing the correspondence between the Secretary of State and Mr. Foster, respecting the *affair* of the Chesapeake, settlement number two, of which I have to observe two things. First, to see

whether the British government will not again disavow their own minister; and secondly, if they confirm his engagements, to see how they perform his promises? I shall consider as one of the most pleasing days in my life that in which the account shall be closed satisfactorily to our country of that transaction. When I recollect the doctrines publicly asserted on that occasion *by our writers* in Boston, both in conversation and in print, and when I reflect upon the influence which my open, immediate and determined opposition to those doctrines has had on my subsequent life, I cannot but consider it as fortunate that the ground which I then took should be now justified by such authority, that they who then contested it would gladly deny that they ever made a question of it. That was the occasion upon which I discovered to what an extent that party was prepared to sacrifice the independence of our country to British pretensions, and I shall never cease to rejoice that it was the occasion upon which I took care not to suffer myself to be involved in the disgrace of participation in their willing servility.

I join very cordially in the wish of Mr. Monroe that *all* the difference between us and England could be accommodated in like manner. But I fear that day is yet remote. The same spirit which has made them delay for upwards of four years a reparation which from the first knowledge of the offense they acknowledged to be due, the same shuffling spirit which made them to the last moment hold out a pretended punishment of the offender which they had in reality always refused, will still lead them astray from the path of their own interest as well as of justice to us. Such are my apprehensions. The Prince Regent, however, having commenced his political relations with the United States by an act of reparation, may listen to better counsels than his

predecessor. His hands are scarcely yet untied. When he is at liberty to pursue the course of his own inclinations, let us hope he will delight in wiping away the stains upon the honor of his country which her undisguised outrages upon the rights of others, her connivances at forgery, and her licenses for perjury, have brought upon her.

Her neighbor upon the continent is no better than herself, but he manages his card with more dexterity. Since the arrival of Mr. Barlow in France I have had scarcely any communications from Paris. I had previously there an excellent correspondent in Mr. Russell. I only learn that the poet has exercised his diplomatic skill in an official note, and has been promised a satisfactory answer. In the meantime all the American vessels taken by French privateers in the Baltic have been condemned. Most of them without a hearing.

You see I cannot help forgetting that almost every letter I write is opened and read either by French or English officers. Listeners they say seldom hear anything good of themselves. Seal breakers ought not to be more gratified.

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## TO THE SECRETARY OF STATE

No. 78. [JAMES MONROE]

ST. PETERSBURG, 25 January, 1812.

SIR:

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Nothing of a political nature has occurred here since I had the honor of last writing you that materially affected the aspect of affairs. It is still given out by the persons in the confidence of this government that the negotiations at

Bucharest will *certainly* terminate in the conclusion of a peace. This confidence is expressed in terms so unqualified, that it may be unsafe to express any distrust of its accuracy. There are however now many who doubt whether this peace has been or will be accomplished.

Uncertainty is still the predominating character of the relations with France. The refusal of a passport to Mr. Labensky, and the decrees to raise the conscription of 1812, have been succeeded by diplomatic communications in a style of so much gentleness, moderation, and even complacency, that great hopes begin to be entertained, or at least to be circulated here, that the next summer will pass over like the last, without bringing the parties to a hostile issue. The ambassador declares that *all* the differences between the two governments are a mere spider's web; all the ministers of the princes of the Rhenish confederation speak of the preservation of peace as a thing to be expected as much as it is to be desired, but they all hold themselves in readiness to depart at the shortest warning. The newsdealers from the Russian cabinet echo back every sound of peace, with double and treble repetition, while at least five hundred thousand men are already arrayed in mutual opposition, and needing nothing but a dispatch from Paris or from St. Petersburg, to meet each other upon the field of blood in less time than it would take to send the dispatch.

Such is at this moment the singular posture of affairs. No specific negotiation has yet commenced. The report that Count Nesselrode is to go to Paris on a special mission, with powers and instructions for a settlement of all the differences, is yet prevalent, and it is still alleged that his departure is delayed only till the arrival of the Turkish peace. The general characteristic of the juncture is, that both with regard to France and Turkey, the whispers from confidential

quarters are in direct opposition with the public and notorious facts.

I have heard intimations that both the parties are industriously negotiating for the favor of Austria. If this be true there can be little doubt which will negotiate with the greatest efficacy. The Illyrian provinces, held by France as a conquest from Austria, may be offered on one part as the price of her alliance and coöperation. On the other part there is nothing to fear. On the contrary, there is to be conciliated with the feelings of Austria, what she certainly considers as not very propitious to her interests—the Russian conquest and incorporation of the provinces of Moldavia and Wallachia. The primary policy of Austria will doubtless be, as she has already announced, a strict neutrality. The state of her finances, and of her government in general make tranquillity an object essential to her. But it is not clear that a large offer for little exertion and less danger, would find her altogether deaf to the calls of ambition, and the instigations of resentment.

The most difficult and dangerous of all situations under these circumstances is that of Prussia, whose endeavors to obtain admission as a member of the Rhenish confederation are said to have been unsuccessful, whose offer of mediation between the parties has been declined, and who is not even allowed to make those preparations for her own defence which her position would on the event of a war render so indispensably necessary. Within the last month official notice has been published at Berlin, that an officer of the army, who had conceived the idea of raising a Legion of Volunteers, to offer their services in case of war, and had engaged a number of persons out of service to apply to him in that event, has been by order of the government arrested and sent as a prisoner to Glatz, and that another person has

been exiled, for being privy to the design, without having taken a part in it. These secret struggles and public disavowals equally denote the anxious and perilous condition of a state, which can scarcely fail to be the victim of that conflict which she can neither avert nor delay.

It is doubtful whether I shall have another opportunity of transmitting despatches to you, before the return of summer, and the opening of the navigation from this country. If the President's instructions which I am still expecting then allows me the permission, I shall myself embark upon my return to the United States. I am very respectfully etc.[1]

## TO THE SECRETARY OF STATE

No. 80. [JAMES MONROE]

ST. PETERSBURG, 29 February, 1812.

SIR:

*I had the honor of informing you in my last letter that in the conference which I had the day before it was written with the Chancellor, he had spoken without reserve of a war with France as being expected by him. As his remarks upon this subject were connected with other observations respecting the state of our own relations with France, I think it best to repeat them as nearly according to his own expressions as my memory will permit, premising on this, as on former occasions, that the*

[1] "It gives me pleasure to add that the manner in which you have conducted the business of your mission at St. Petersburg meets the entire approbation of the President, and that your remaining there accords with his wishes, more particularly as it did not suit your convenience to accept of a seat on the bench of the Supreme Court of the United States." *Secretary of State to John Quincy Adams*, November 23, 1811. Ms. See also *Madison to John Quincy Adams*, November 15, 1811, in *Writings of Madison* (Rives), II. 515.

*Count always gives me to understand that in conversing freely upon topics of so delicate a nature he speaks altogether in confidence. I do not consider this as requiring me to withhold from you the correct report of the sentiments, and even of the expressions which he uses, but as meaning only that they shall not be made public. Thus far he undoubtedly intends to be confidential, and in communicating to you his observations I write in the same confidence.*[1]

He began by mentioning that he had just received from Stockholm, the English papers, containing the Regent's speech or message to Parliament at the opening of the session.[2] He observed that it made no mention whatsoever of the north of Europe; and that its tone with regard to the United States was of a conciliatory nature; that it spoke of the affair of the *Chesapeake* as having been amicably arranged, and expressed the hope that other subjects in discussion would be likewise adjusted. I intimated to him that professions of a conciliatory disposition had always been sufficiently made by the British government; but they had been so long the only things we had experienced from England that were conciliatory that now something more would be necessary to produce the effect, and of this I was sorry to say I could scarcely discern any prospect. He said there were some rumors of a new offer of negotiation from France to England. At least that a French messenger had landed in England; but that might be for the sake of exciting the apprehension here of a separate negotiation for peace, which in the great and extraordinary armaments said to be now making in France and destined against Russia, might be thought calculated to produce a certain effect here. I told him that as to negotiations between France and England I did not much believe in them or in their success, if really

[1] Cypher.

[2] January 7. See *Annual Register*, 1812, 326.

attempted; but that I had heard there were prospects of war between France and Russia, which I lamented. He had mentioned the Emperor Napoleon. How happy would it be for the tranquillity of mankind, if it were possible that the will for peace could be inspired into his heart! The Count replied that by his advices from Paris it was considered there that a better understanding with the United States was intended and even explicitly avowed. That the entire revocation of the Berlin and Milan decrees, so far as concerned the United States was confirmed, and that with regard to American vessels which should arrive in France, there would be little or no difficulty made as to whence they came, or as to the nature of their cargoes. I said that my own information without being so particular was, that the aspect of the disposition of the French government towards the United States was more amicable, and more just than it had been for a long period. There was an obvious political interest to account for the change. As the Emperor saw the situation in which the English had chosen to place themselves with respect to America, he was taking advantage of it by assuming a course of an opposite character. I believed the British government alone, by a like change of their policy could prevent his succeeding in it completely. The Count said that in the general view of the Russian policy this new turn was highly agreeable to him, both from the interest which this government took in whatever was advantageous to the United States, and because it showed something like a relaxation in favor of commerce; *but he referred me to our former conversations for his opinion upon the character of the Emperor Napoleon. He did not think that the permanency of anything to which he should assent concerning commerce could be relied upon. Every resolution, every act was the result of an impulse of the moment—the effect of an*

*occasional impression. Today the impression was of one sort and the measure corresponded with it; tomorrow the impression would be of an opposite nature and the measure would follow that too. To make them consistent was not in the nature of the man. He never looked at commerce with commercial eyes. He never considered commerce as an interest in which all mankind was concerned. He saw in it nothing but the trade of a certain class of individuals. But in truth, added the Count, commerce is the concern of us all. The merchants are indeed only a class of individuals bearing a small proportion to the mass of a people; but commerce as the exchange of mutual superfluities for mutual wants is the mutual chain of human association. It is the foundation of all the useful and pacific intercourse between nations. It is a primary necessity to all classes of people. The Emperor Napoleon will never see it in this light and so his commercial regulations and promises will never be systematic or consistent.* You will find that you can place little dependence upon them. "*As to his will for peace and tranquility—no!*" *continued the Count,* "*that is impossible. I can say to you in confidence that he once told me so himself. I was speaking to him about Spain and Portugal and he said to me,* '*I must always be going after the peace of those, so where could I go but to Spain? I went to Spain because I could not go elsewhere.*' *And this was all he had to say in justification of his having gone into Spain and Portugal; and now, as perhaps there, he is not quite satisfied with his going, he may intend to turn against us from the same want of any other place where to go.*" *I said that one would think Spain and Portugal still furnished and were likely long to furnish him quite room enough to go in without making it necessary to gratify his passion in another quarter. The Count replied that there was no political consideration whatsoever upon which he founded a hope that peace might yet be preserved. But there was a con-*

*sideration of a different nature which might have its weight and upon the effect of which he still rested some expectation. It was the scarcity of grain. He understood it was considerable at Paris. I said I had heard the same and that the price of wheat and of flour had much advanced, tho' not that of bread, as it was kept down by payments of the bakers received from the government. He said that the scarcity was so great that there had been recently several riots at the doors of the bakers both at Paris and at Lyons, and as large armies could not be put in motion without very large supplies of such provisions, he still hoped that as the months of April and May would come on, the inconvenience and difficulty of procuring such supplies for those armies would ultimately arrest their march.* "For which however," added he, "the circumstances have rendered it proper for us to place ourselves in a state of preparation as we have accordingly done." [1]

*I then passed to another subject* [2] the removal of Count Pahlen from the Russian mission to the United States to that of Brazil. I said that my instructions made it my duty to express to the Emperor, the sentiments entertained by my government, and their strong sense of the friendly policy constantly pursued by his Majesty towards them, and that it gave me peculiar pleasure to communicate to him the assurance that Count Pahlen's deportment during his residence in the United States had been highly agreeable to the President, and had conciliated universal regard and esteem. He said that he was sure that the Emperor would receive this information with pleasure, and that such a testimonial would contribute further to raise his good opinion of Count Pahlen. That the letters from that officer had constantly spoken in the highest terms of the treatment that he had received from

[1] This last sentence was also in cypher, but underlined.

[2] Cypher.

all classes of people in America, and that he would quit the country with the warmest regard for it. *I observed that his mission to Brazil would place him in an advantageous position for observation not only in regard to that country itself, but to the scenes which were passing in the other parts of South America, particularly the Spanish provinces. He asked me whether the government of the United States took any measure respecting them, in what light they considered them? I said there were deputies at the seat of our government at the province of Venezuela. That our government considered with favorable sentiments the change that was taking place in those provinces believing it would be generally advantageous to the interests of mankind, and that I readily confided to him these views of my government because from former conversations that I had held with him, and from other circumstances of which I had heard, I thought there was the most perfect coincidence between his views on this subject and theirs. He said they were the same. There was only one doubt on his mind which gave him some concern. The people of those provinces had been kept in such a state of grievous oppression that he was afraid they would in accomlishing their emancipation exhibit examples of that sort of violence and those scenes of cruelty which experience had proved to be too common in such revolutions. He hoped, however, it might be otherwise. He had been in favor of a free commerce between them and this country which would have implied a recognition of their new state, and he had made a proposition to that effect (in the Imperial Council).* "Mais en cela j'ai echoué. *The apprehension of those discords to which I have alluded prevented my success.* On pourra cependant revenir par cet objet."

*In my letter of 26 October last, No. 73, reporting to you this proposition of the Chancellor and its failure in the Council the real cause of its failure was suggested. There was a lurking*

*English influence working at bottom, and the terror of disorders and cruelties was a motive suitable to be avowed.*

*Since the day upon which I had this conference with the Count the symptoms of approaching war between France and this country have been constantly increasing in number and in gravity. The Turkish peace so long and so confidently spoken of as certain is cast up a forlorn hope. It is believed that the Emperor imputes the disappointment entirely to the interference of a French agency, and that the irritation which it excited in his mind determined him not to send Count Nesselrode to Paris as he had intended, and of which he had even communicated his intention to the French ambassador.*[1] The occupation of Swedish Pomerania by French troops is supposed to be a mere preliminary to the Russian war. Since this event a Colonel Knesebeck, an aide de camp to the king of Prussia, and Count Löwenhielm, an aide de camp to the king of Sweden, have arrived here on special missions. The first to urge again the Emperor Alexander to negotiate with France, and the second probably to concert resistance against France. Austria assembles a body of troops in Gallicia, of which an official communication has been made here by Count St. Julien. Austria professes at the same time amicable intentions towards Russia—the resolution to remain strictly neutral if war should ensue—but with friendly advice to the Emperor, to negotiate with France. In the meantime France, *and all the princes of the Rhenish confederation* are arming with all possible expedition, and the note of preparation here is as strong as ever. Three regiments of the garrison of this city march this week for the frontiers. I am with the greatest respect, etc.

[1] Cypher.

## TO ABIGAIL ADAMS

ST. PETERSBURG, 30 March, 1812.

. . . . . .

The spirit which has manifested itself in Congress since the commencement of their session, if its ultimate result should be *real* and *substantial* preparation for war, will be the happiest turn for our public affairs that has occurred since the treaty with France in 1800. It is apparently not just now the wish of the British government to have a war with America added to the work they already have upon their hands. But they will yield nothing in negotiation, because they have formed a settled opinion that America will not, perhaps that she cannot, undertake a war against England. In the condition of our public force (if force it can be seriously called) this opinion is one of the best founded and wisest that has found its way to the head of a British ministry for many years. The rights against which England is pursuing a course of systematic outrage are of a nature which we *might* and *ought* to maintain by force. But before we resort to force for maintaining them, we must be in possession of the force itself, and really with our army of five or six thousand men, and our navy of ten or twelve frigates, to talk of maintaining by *force* any right whatsoever against such a power as Great Britain is too ridiculous. We *have had* many prevailing opinions among ourselves which must be fairly and completely disgorged before we can soberly *think* of maintaining our rights by force. The opinion that Britain, or indeed any European nation, will square her political conduct by the rule of her own *interest* is one of them. No less a statesman than John de Witt

has been said to have stumbled more than once over this fundamental position, that the policy of nations would always be governed by their interests. John had not been, like Chancellor Oxenstiern's son, *to see how* the world *was* governed. Many of our politicians need a tour of travel to make the same observation. Another opinion among us which our stomachs stood very stoutly for a great length of time was, that a British ministry was to be intimidated by a prospect of famine in the West India islands, or by riots among the journeyman weavers, spinsters and pinmakers of their manufacturing towns. Experience has pretty well disburthened us of this error and I hope it will never encumber us again. Perhaps we have yet to learn that looking and talking big will be as ineffectual to maintain our rights as the interests of our adversaries or the hunger of West India negroes or Nottingham frame breakers. To maintain our rights we must first *raise* and organize force. Considering the measures proposed in Congress as resulting from this conviction and destined to this end I do most heartily approve of and rejoice in them. But there must be connected with them measures of raising revenue, which I do not yet see so clearly disclosed, and the effect of which upon the popular sentiment it may not be so easy to foretell. Mr. Gallatin's last annual report observes ingeniously that our revenue from impost in peace is almost sufficient for the expenses of war, and in war would scarcely suffice for the wants of peace. The last part of this remark is unquestionably true, but we must not calculate that the utmost produce of our national revenue which we have yet had would *almost* meet the expenses of a war. It has been *in my opinion* one of our misfortunes, as well as one of our errors, to rely too much upon impost for revenues, and not only to sacrifice but to decry all the others. I believe, though I am afraid

this will yet pass for political heresy, that all the taxes which were abandoned must be restored, and that many others much more burdensome must be imposed, before we can entertain a rational expectation of maintaining *by force* against Great Britain any right of which she may choose to deprive us. Now until a real and respectable *force* shall be raised, organized, systematically provided for by substantial revenue, and prepared for vigorous action, I should hold it impossible to commence a war with England, and I hope that no such measure will be taken.

At the same time it would be worse than folly for us to imagine that we shall be allowed henceforth to enjoy upon the ocean any rights which we are not able to maintain by force. The base and servile doctrine of holding our navigation and commercial rights upon the tenure of England's friendship and protection, the beetle-blind idiotism of pretending to hold them upon her sense of justice, appear to be losing their influence in America and may they never be harbored by us again. It is quite time for us to show, what for my part I never doubted, that there is among us a latent energy capable of being roused into action with a vigor and effect of which neither England, nor any other European nation, nor a large portion of our own people, have any suspicion. I wish to see in the course now pursued by Congress an approximation to that result, and with this hope welcome the spirit which has united parties otherwise discordant in the determination to raise and prepare a public force. I hope also to see them followed up with corresponding measures for raising an adequate revenue. Without them all the rest would be mere political bubbles.

We have here the prospect of a new war which announces itself as the probable shock of two immense powers. It is said with confidence that Russia has now under arms and

disciplined for war not less than nine hundred thousand men. There are upon her frontiers from the Baltic to the Black Sea undoubtedly more than three hundred thousand, and a number at least equal to them of French, Prussians, Poles and Germans, are arrayed for conflict against them. Ten or fifteen regiments of the choicest troops of the empire have within the last month marched from this city to join the forces on the Polish border. The commencement of the campaign will according to all present appearances not be delayed beyond the months of May and June. The attack, however, it is not supposed will begin from this quarter. The first events of the war which will if it commences be of great and striking character, will reach you by shorter conveyances than from hence.

## TO THE SECRETARY OF STATE

No. 81. [JAMES MONROE]

ST. PETERSBURG, 31 March, 1812.

SIR:

A full month has elapsed since I had the honor of writing you last, and that letter still remains sealed in my desk ready to be dispatched by the first practicable opportunity. Since it was written the three regiments mentioned in it have actually marched for the Polish border and have been followed by eight or ten others; principally the Imperial Guards. The departure of the Emperor himself is expected in the course of a few weeks or perhaps days. *He himself told me last week that notwithstanding all the pains he had taken to avoid this conflict (cette lutte) it must come. That he would not commence the war, but that he expected to be attacked and*

*that every indication was of war.*[1] The Prussian officer, Colonel Knesebeck, returned without succeeding in his mission. The advice of Austria to *negotiate*, or rather perhaps to *yield* has been equally unsuccessful. Count Nesselrode has not been sent and probably will not be sent to Paris. Prussia has concluded a treaty of alliance with France, and the Prussian ports upon the Baltic as well as those of Swedish Pomerania are already occupied by French troops. Orders have already been issued for arming and equipping for sea, the Russian fleets on the Black Sea, the White Sea and the Baltic, and the principal command of all is to be held by English officers in the Russian service.

From all these circumstances, and many others, it can scarcely be doubted that the war will commence as soon as the season will admit of active military operations. At present there is a bare possibility that it may yet be deferred, on which the hopes of some and the fears of others hinge. The intimation is circulating but upon doubtful authority, that a personal interview between the Emperor Alexander and the French Emperor will take place; and it is supposed that they may meet in some expedient to reconcile what their ministers and ambassadors have not been able to settle. On this event however little reliance is placed by any person. The war may be considered as inevitable.

It is remarkable that in this state of things, the tone of negotiations so far as it is known to the public is still not merely moderate but courteous. Count Chernicheff arrived here about a fortnight since, with a letter to the Emperor Alexander full of amicable professions. But if, as there is resaon to suppose, the demand that a French garrison shall be admitted at Riga, has been extended to all the Russian ports upon the Baltic, not excepting St. Petersburg itself,

[1] Cypher.

it is impossible that it should be complied with. It is also suggested that Russia has been required to force the fulfillment of the engagements of Sweden, to adopt the continental system of exclusion to the English commerce. Instead of which the crisis will to all appearance result in a defensive alliance and a common cause between Sweden and Russia.

It is very certain that since the reunion of Holland and the Hanseatic Cities to France, Sweden and Russia have been the countries through which the English commerce (chiefly of colonial articles) has partially found its way to Germany, France and Italy. So alluring have been the profits of this commerce to the merchants in these ports, and so valuable has it proved to the revenues of the governments, that the supreme authorities of the two countries have not felt the inclination, if they have possessed the power effectually to interdict it. They have been enriching themselves by it, at the expense of France and of her dependencies, which the British Orders in Council have at the same time deprived of all or nearly all their own commerce, excepting such as they could suffer to be carried on by mutual licenses. In 1809 this trade had been forced through the channel of Holland; in 1810 through Heligoland, Holstein and the Hanseatic Cities. It furnished the pretext for their reunion to France. Its attempts to pass through the Prussian ports in the latter part of the summer of 1810 failed, because those ports were placed under the custody of French guardians. France it is evident cannot long tolerate the ransom under which she is laid by this combination of affairs. She finds herself under the same *necessity* of war against Sweden and Russia, that she did for the reunion of Holland. The immediate cause of this war therefore is the British Orders in Council; and probably the knowledge that they are pro-

ducing that effect is the preponderating argument to the British ministry for adhering to them, when their pernicious consequences to Britain herself have become universally notorious. The policy of their adhesion is as shallow now, as it was, when their refusal to repeal them sanctioned the incorporation of Holland with France. *A war between France and Russia will doubtless for the moment promote the interests of England but like all their former speculations will terminate in disappointment.*[1]

The course of policy lately pursued by Sweden has disconcerted the anticipations of most men, much more than that of Russia. That Sweden, under the adoption of a French general for her future sovereign, and with the bitter experience of her losses and misfortunes still so recent, should again become the ally of Russia in a war against France, is a result so different from that which was expected, that even those who witnessed the fact find themselves at loss to account for it. The predominating interest of the moment is indeed the same for both Russia and Sweden. The Swedish ports of Pomerania are even more advantageously situated for affording a vent to the English commerce than those of Russia. Of this advantage her merchants had availed themselves, and her government, though it had submitted to the necessity of declaring war against England, had avowed its inability to prohibit effectually the trade. They had also refused to furnish sailors, at the requisition of France, to man the fleets which France is preparing for sea. France took possession of the ports of Swedish Pomerania, and incorporated the garrison of Stralsund, three thousand men, into her own army. The Swedish Minister of Foreign Affairs gave notice to Mr. de Cabre, the chargé d'affaires of France, that unless the French troops should

[1] Cypher.

be withdrawn Sweden would open her ports to the English, accept the advantageous terms of peace offered by England, and consider the debt *due by the government of Sweden in Holland, as liquidated.*[1]

Count Löwenhielm was immediately sent here and has been received with great distinction by the Emperor. General Von Suchtelen who had resided at Stockholm as an informal ambassador, while Count Stedingk had been in the same capacity here, from Sweden, and who had very recently returned, leaving only a chargé d'affaires, has been dispatched again to resume his post, and all the outward indications are of a perfect mutual concert between Russia and Sweden in opposition to the present measures of France. Whispers of distrust are yet circulated by some who are perhaps unwilling to find their political foresight in default. They suspect or insinuate duplicity in the actual measures of Sweden, and that her opposition to the French possession of her ports in Pomerania, is merely for the sake of saving appearances. These surmises have probably no foundation, and the Russian government gives no credit to them.

The Secretary General of the Empire and the Secretary of the Imperial Council for the department of Legislation, were last evening arrested and sent into banishment. They were persons of distinguished talents and very recently in high favor. The cause of thier sudden disgrace is attributed to improper communications with France, but neither is nor probably will be known with certainty. I am with great respect, etc.

[1] Not in cypher.

## TO ALEXANDER HILL EVERETT

ST. PETERSBURG, 10 April, 1812.

DEAR SIR:

I have received your favor of 3 January from London, forwarded by Mr. Navarro, and although uncertain whether this letter will find you still in England, I will not pass by the opportunity of thanking you for it.

Your representation of the state of things in England, though far from being drawn in dazzling or even in gay colors, has I am convinced the more substantial merit of truth. Almost all the English travellers who have for some years past favored the public with their observations made in America have thought proper to represent our national character as vicious, upon no better foundation than that they had witnessed in America individual instances of vice. The Edinburgh reviewers, with an eye of philosophical penetration worthy of Peter Pindar's magpie peeping into a marrow bone, prophesy that the American character, which they pronounce positively bad now, will be greatly improved when wealth comes to be more generally *inherited* than *acquired*.[1] If for all the moral and political pollution that the whole manufactory of English dragnets has been able to gather from all the foul bottoms of the American continent owe improvement from the prevalence of hereditary wealth, is to consist in a substitution of *innumerable nightly assassinations*, burglaries and larcenies, Lud's men to break stocking weaver's frames, and Irishmen to knock down for sport people as they are coming out of church, Catholics driven to rebellion by religious persecution, and a master sacrificing his friends, his friendships, and his

[1] *Edinburgh Review*, XV. 442.

principles for "*Panem et Circenses,*" I would put it as a problem to the arithmetical acuteness of the Edinburgh reviewers *how much* we shall be gainers by the exchange?

I have seen in some of the newspapers that the Attorney General, Sir Samuel Romilly, in speaking officially of some of those dreadful enormities mentioned in your letter, lamented them as indications of a character peculiarly vicious in the English nation. The remark might be proper in a public officer whose duties are in some sort those of a *censor morum,* but it would not be liberal in a foreigner to consider transactions of such a nature as evidences of national character. I do not so consider them. But they may fairly be taken as presumptive proofs that the representations of unparalleled virtue and superhuman felicity, which *American* painters have drawn as characteristic attributes of the English nation, are as wide from the real truth, as the *Smelfungus* coloring of the British traveller in America. This contrast of falsehood between the English pictures of America and the American pictures of England has struck me as peculiarly remarkable, and has in no small degree mortified my patriotic feelings as an American. Its effect in our own country has been doubly mischievous, by exciting among many of our young minds a disgust and contempt of their countrymen, and an extravagant and foolish admiration of another nation. I am very glad that *you* have had an opportunity of observing for yourself the real condition of nature, of men, and of society in England. I will not say that its tendencies will be to produce a salutary review of some of your own prejudications; but I hope and believe it will tend to correct some of the prejudices of others. You have doubtless seen much to admire and you have too much justice and good sense to depreciate that which is estimable for the place where it is found. But there is withal in Eng-

land a spirit of arrogant pretension, and a gloss of splendor, which may be seen through without any great depth of penetration. I am well assured, and the persuasion gives me pleasure, that on your return to our native shores you will be able from the heart to say with Voltaire's Tancrède, "Plus je vis d'étrangers, plus j'aimai ma patrie."

As it appears that the British government still deem an adhesion to their Orders in Council expedient, I see no prospect of an amicable, or indeed of any other, arrangement of their disputes with America. Their present professions of amity and conciliation appear to be borrowed from the practice of their own gentlemen of the road, who take a traveller's purse with all possible amity and decorum. I think, however, their present partiality to the Orders in Council proceeds from the belief, not without reason, that they will produce a rupture between France and Russia. A very few months will discover to the world, though probably not to them, on what foundations this reliance stands.

You know the only glimpses we can catch of English literature are an occasional pamphlet or review brought by a traveller to amuse him on the road. Mr. Patterson last summer brought some of the latest numbers of the *Edinburgh Review*, in one of which I met that *oracular* sentence upon the national character of the Americans, which I have just alluded to. There too I found a long, and much more amusing account of the *Curse of Kehama;* it excited the wish to see the book itself. The mode of reviewing practised by the Edinburgh critics is new, and they have made it fashionable. They give the title of a book, and then publish a dissertation of their own upon the subject of which it treats. Their essays are tinctured with strong prejudices, mingled up with a curious compound of scholastic dogmatism and fine gentlemantility. I remember reading an account

in one of their former numbers of a voluminous edition or translation of Sallust, in which they said *they* had been accustomed to read Sallust in books about the size of a *hand at whist.* I read, however, almost all their treatises, and many of them with entertainment and instruction. In the review of the Lady of the Lake there is a disquisition upon the source of Walter Scott's popularity as a poet, with which I was very much pleased. Some of its ideas are repeated in the review of Southey's *Curse*, and while they tell us here how Mr. Southey does not do so and so, like Mr. Scott, they inform us on the other hand how Mr. Scott does not use the machinery of Mr. Southey. *Don Roderick* I have not yet seen, but among the readers of poetry here there are some who have and who say it is the author's masterpiece. That, I suppose, is because, as was said to account for the vogue of another book, it is poetical, political and personal. If Don Roderick is a great admirer of Lord Wellington, he ought to give at the same time his candid opinion of the Duke of Albufera.[1]

I condole with you upon the extinction of that illustrious luminary of letters and science the monthly *Anthology*. If the *General Repository of Literature* [2] gives but once a quarter to the public as much wit and as much wisdom as the *Anthology* was wont to emit every month, it will deserve as long a life, and enjoy as fair a prospect of immortality. . . . I am etc.

[1] Louis Gabriel Suchet, Duke of Albufera (1770–1826).

[2] *The General Repository and Review*, established in Cambridge, Mass., in this year.

## TO THE SECRETARY OF STATE

No. 83.[1] [JAMES MONROE]

ST. PETERSBURG, 28 April, 1812.

SIR:

*The Emperor Alexander left this city on the 21st instant, the day after which I received from the Chancellor Count Romanzoff the official communication of which I have the honor to enclose herewith a copy, together with that of my answer.*

*Two days before his Majesty's departure, Count Romanzoff sent me a note requesting me to call upon him the next morning, which I accordingly did. He told me that the Emperor having fixed upon the next day for his departure, he himself should be obliged very soon afterwards to follow him, and as there might perhaps be before his return some discussions in which the interests of the United States as well as those of Russia might be involved, from his wish to defend and support both, he wished to know as far as I was informed and might think proper to confide to him, what was the precise state of the relations between the United States and France or England, or both. That some time ago the Russian ambassador at Paris, Prince Kurakin, had written that there was to be a treaty between France and the United States, and that arrangements favorable to America had actually been settled in France; but lately there seemed to be some uncertainty upon the subject, and he had seen in one of the latest* Journaux de l'Empire, *that of 27th March, an article purporting to be dated from Baltimore, which seemed to hold out an angry and threatening language towards the United States. I told him that since my last conversation with him I had no communication from my own government of a more recent*

[1] Dispatch No. 82 is missing from the State Department files.

*date than I had then, nor had I any information from which I could infer any change had occurred in the state of our relations from that which I had then suggested to him. That with respect to France all that I could say from the letters I had received from Mr. Barlow was, that no definitive arrangement had been agreed upon, and with respect to England none had taken, nor as I believed was likely to take place. I had heard that late English newspapers contained articles of intelligence from New York to the 14th February, and that Mr. Foster the British minister was in negotiation with the Secretary of State, from which negotiation it was expected a treaty would be concluded. I could say nothing from official sources upon this subject. My own opinion was that no such treaty could be concluded. I was perfectly sure it would not unless the revocation of the British Orders in Council should be one of its explicit conditions. If Mr. Foster is authorized to stipulate for the revocation of the orders, a treaty is possible. The Count asked, how I thought France in that case would take it? I said I did not know, but I believed the American government would not enquire whether France would take it well or ill. It was the right of the United States as a neutral nation to trade with France; that the American government was bound to protect. It was denied them by the British Orders in Council, and unless restored by the revocation of those Orders in Council I had no doubt but the United States would vindicate it by war, but I did not anticipate a declaration of war by the United States at present. The measures that had been taken this winter were measures of preparation. Upon the ocean we could do nothing. If hostilities were to commence there they must come from the part of England and not from ours. To attack the British upon our continent we must be prepared. A bill for raising 25,000 men had been passed by Congress. They must be raised by voluntary enlistments, for we had no system of conscription. It was a difficult and slow way to*

*raise, organize, and discipline 25,000 men. I did not think it could be done in less time, nor should we commit the folly of commencing or declaring war before we could do something to maintain it, but unless the Orders in Council were revoked a war must eventually be the result. Did I think it probable they would be revoked? No, every present prospect was to the contrary. I thought their existence now depended solely on that of Mr. Perceval, as prime minister of England. Did I think Mr. Perceval would remain prime minister? I believed he would. Was it not probable the Marquis of Wellesley would come in again after the Catholic question should be disposed of? I thought not. But how was it possible that the English Regent should be so fascinated (said the Count) by Mr. Perceval, "un homme à ce qu'il parait assez mediocre," in preference to Wellesley, whose career has been so much more brilliant and who appeared to have rendered real services to the nation—a man especially so to the affairs in Spain? I said, I had my suspicions that the Catholic question was little more than the ostensible cause of Lord Wellesley's retirement, and that a more efficacious real cause was the state itself of affairs in Spain. But how so? There was a good deal of misunderstanding between the British government and that of the Spaniards at Cadiz. It had already proceeded so far that the English had threatened to abandon them. Lord Wellesley must before this time have strong misgivings about the ultimate issue of their cause in Spain. He may be glad to retire from his stake upon it while it has yet the shew of being unimpaired. The Count said he thought it very probable and that the motive would be a very rational one. I then asked him if he expected very soon to leave the city. He said within two or three days. The Emperor had finally resolved to go and review the situation of his army on the frontiers. He should very shortly send me a written notice that during his absence the business of the Department of Foreign Affairs would*

*be entrusted to Count Soltikoff. His own departure he said was necessary, tho' he regretted it much, and he intimated that his advice had been not to go. But the Emperor had decided otherwise. The forces assembled on the frontiers he observed were immense on both sides. There was in history scarcely anything like it. It was like romance. What it would come to he knew not. That perpetual restlessness and agitation of the Emperor Napoleon were such that it was impossible to say how it would terminate, and the most extraordinary thing of all was that there was no cause of war. On the part of this country the affair of the Duchy of Oldenburg was the only object. Russia had made a declaration in that case reserving her rights, but in that very declaration had stated explicitly that she did not consider it as a cause for renouncing the alliance, or for changing the course of her policy. I said that from the late report of the Duke of Bassano to the Emperor Napoleon it would seem that the principle assumed by France went to a total exclusion of all commerce from the country of her friends, the English Orders in Council went to a total exclusion of all commerce from itself. But, said the Count, a total exclusion of all commerce is impossible. You might as well set up a total exclusion of all air to breathe, or of all food to subsist upon from a whole nation as a total exclusion of commerce. You must have commerce in some shape either lawful and regular, or by contraband and licenses. The system of licenses is founded upon falsehood and immorality. A sovereign who countenanced such vices is no longer a sovereign; it is a virtual abdication of his authority. He is a sovereign for that very purpose, to maintain justice and morality, and to give his sanction to falsehood and injustice is in substance ceasing to reign. The system of formally proscribing commerce by law in general terms, and then allowing it by a sale of special licenses, appeared to him of the same nature as the old Popish practice of selling indulgences for crimes,*

*and like opening a shop to sell titles of nobility to infamous characters.*

*I thought these opinions, if expressed in very strong terms, substantially correct, but observed that France would probably allege that the English had set the first example of this political profligacy. That he said was true, but by which party so practised it was equally scandalous and unjustifiable.*

*The Count left the city on the twenty-third, three days after the Emperor, for the headquarters (the expression is compatible with the official language of the Chancellor's circular notification) of the Emperor to be at Wilna. It is certain by the Count's expectation that before the campaign begins there will be a negotiation to attempt a pacific arrangement there. I should only add the wish that with regard to the commercial question the Emperor Alexander adhere to the principles recognized by the Count in this conference.* I have the honor to be very respectfully, etc.

## TO ABIGAIL ADAMS

St. Petersburg, 30 April, 1812.

The inclosed is a copy of a letter which was written near a month before an opportunity occurred of sending it on its way to you. I am afraid that the delay will entirely defeat its object, and that it will be found impracticable to send out my two sons to me the next summer. The river Neva is now again open, and I trust that in about six weeks or two months opportunities for writing to you again will present themselves. To you, my dear Mother and to you alone, I am indebted for information concerning my family and friends in your quarter of the world. From June last until the commencement of the present year I have received from

you several letters in the course of the winter, and have never suffered a month to pass by without writing to you. Since I wrote you last we have received your letter to my wife of 25 November which she has answered. I sent last week this answer, with another letter from her, and my own of 30 March to Mr. Russell at London, with a request to him to forward them. I suppose he will have no difficulty to do this; for although Mr. Foster did threaten that if our non-importation should not be repealed his government would retaliate; and although I trust it has not been repealed, yet a non-importation from America may not be so convenient in England just now, with the quartern loaf at eighteen or nineteen pence, and all the importation of grain and flour from France, of which they boasted so much last year, prohibited not only by law but by scarcity.

The effects of our non-importation are doubtless felt and pretty strongly felt in England, nor is there any doubt of her disposition to retaliate whenever retaliation shall not consist in self starvation. There was no inconsiderable pains taken last summer to demonstrate in Parliament and to the public that England was quite independent of America for supplies of *bread*, and official statements were published to show that in the course of the preceding year more than double the quantity of the staff of life had been imported from France to that which had come from the United States. The strength of this argument rested on the position that France was an infallible source of subsistence for England, and that it was better to depend upon France for subsistence than upon America. Therefore England might boldly threaten America with non-importation, and even proceed to war with perfect indifference as to the consequences. This calculation has been for the present disconcerted by a scanty harvest in France. The Emperor Napoleon says that nine

years of abundance in France have been succeeded by one year of *mediocrity*. That is to say a year when famine has driven the people to such riotous extremities that in one city he has been shooting a number of men and *women* to preserve peace. He has also been obliged to provide two millions of Rumford soups a day, from April to September, to be distributed throughout the Empire. A good harvest in France the present year will doubtless supply the deficiencies of the last, but will not produce grain sufficient for her own consumption, and although she may this year have markets open to her which for some years past have been closed, yet for her own wants, as well as for those of her armies in Spain and Portugal, she must depend upon importation from America. Her threats of retaliation upon non-importation are therefore not very formidable, and whether she perseveres in her present system of war with the language of peace, or proceeds to that of open and avowed war, I am persuaded the event will prove to all who have eyes to see or ears to hear that her dependence upon commercial intercourse with us is more essential to her than ours upon her is to us. Her government, however, has not yet acquired this conviction nor is it probable they will until the evidence of it shall be more clear and unequivocal than five years of experience has yet proved it. . . .

1 May, 1812.

In a Hamburg newspaper which I received last evening there is a paragraph, dated London, 28 March, asserting by letters that morning arrived from Liverpool it appeared an embargo was laid upon all the American vessels there until the arrival of dispatches expected from America; and another article, dated 31 March, announced that the 41st regiment and the 4th battalion of the 50th and 103d regiments had received orders to embark for America, and that

the Lord Mayor of London had again advanced the price of bread three pence sterling the quartern loaf. If this information is correct, as I think it now probable it is, the British government have come to their determination, and are resolved upon a war with the United States. They have probably chosen their time for this measure when they suppose it cannot be known in time to stop the supplies which can be shipped before the new harvest comes in. They doubtless calculate also upon having a new market opened to them in the Baltic. They certainly have reason for trusting in some degree to this resource, but the armies assembled in the north of Europe must so greatly increase the consumption on this part of the continent that the most abundant granaries will have no extraordinary superfluity to send abroad.

I have been sincerely and anxiously desirous that this war might ultimately be avoided. I saw little prospect of any ultimate benefit to be derived from it to my own country, and I could not look forward to its possible consequences upon our internal organizations without some apprehension. But as it must come, I feel great consolation in the spirit of unanimity which appears to have marked the late proceedings in Congress, and hope it is a solid pledge of that which will carry us through this trial with honor and success. The present English ministry have assumed as a principle that there shall be no neutrality upon the ocean. Between submission to this edict of expulsion from one of the most important common possessions of mankind, and a war to maintain our right to it, the United States have exhausted every expedient that wisdom could suggest and honor could endure. To forego the right of navigating the ocean would be a pusillanimity which of itself would degrade us from the rank and rights of an independent nation. Yet it has been too clearly demonstrated that nothing but force can now

maintain it. That Britain should abuse her maritime power in the consciousness of its superiority is so conformable to the ordinary experience of mankind that it is hardly worth while to indulge our indignation upon seeing it. But as it is the nature of the serpent to sting, it is the duty of man to bruise his head for self-protection. On the high seas we have no resource and can have no efficacious defence against her. But she has vulnerable parts, and I pray to God that those who have the administration of our public affairs may have studied and discovered where they are situated, and prepared to touch them till she shall feel.

As the embargo at Liverpool must undoubtedly be extended to the other ports of the British islands, it will doubtless have been combined with orders to take and carry in vessels at sea. In that case we shall have no access to or from the Baltic the present year, and I must at all events be disappointed in the wish of having my sons come to me. I expressly requested in my former letters to you and to Mr. Gray that they might not be sent, if we should have war with England. I shall on many accounts regret the loss of our commercial intercourse with Russia, but it has already become the last year much less advantageous, though vastly more extensive than the preceding seasons. And the prospects of the present year are more unfavorable than they have ever been before. A war between France and Russia, now more than probable, will necessarily open all the ports of this country to the English flag with advantages of commerce with which we could not stand a competition. All the articles of merchandise that our vessels bring here are the same of which the English have such floods to pour upon the continent when once open to them. The only exception is cotton, of which even now, just at the opening of a new year's navigation, the market is so overstocked that it can scarcely

be sold at its first cost in America. There has been during the last year a great outlet to foreign merchandise by land carriage from this country into Germany. But as all Germany will be in alliance with France against Russia, the moment the war breaks out all commercial intercourse will be stopped, and all the issues of exportation choked up. The consumption of these colonial merchandise in this country is very small, and scarcely sufficient to afford a market for fifty vessels in a year. When the English will have many hundreds flocking here the chance of ours in competition with them must in nine cases out of ten be equivalent to a total loss of the voyage and cargo. If there should between Russia and France be no war, I do not yet believe that England will venture upon one against us. I think, therefore, that our merchants must on every possible contingency renounce all hope of a profitable trade with Russia this year.

. . . . . .

## TO THE SECRETARY OF STATE

No. 84. [JAMES MONROE]

ST. PETERSBURG, 9 May, 1812.

SIR:

Since the departure of the Emperor Alexander, the opinion has been more generally prevalent that previous to the commencement of hostilities, a personal interview between him and the Emperor Napoleon will take place, and the expectation appears to be generally entertained that the result of it will be a pacific arrangement, which may still avert the war now so imminent. The official notification of the Emperor's journey, a copy of which was enclosed with my last letter, as

you will perceive, assigns the *ordinary* review of his troops, and the inspection of some of his provinces as the motives for his absence from the capital. Thus studiously is every expression still avoided which might intimate a design of war, and a similar caution is observed in every public document of the other party. In the last conversation I had with the Chancellor he explicitly told me there was no cause of war between France and Russia, and the French ambassador has very recently and repeatedly told me the same thing. It is now, however, ascertained that if the war should commence both Austria and Prussia will take part in it as allies of France. How far this event was expected I do not positively know. I believe that it was sufficiently seen that Prussia could do no otherwise; but until very lately the neutrality of Austria was considered as certain, and there were even hopes entertained that she would eventually side with this country. Of her neutrality the most positive assurances were given by her minister here, who appears to have been as much surprised as anyone, at the information which was lately communicated from *Sweden* of an alliance offensive and defensive between France and Austria, signed at Paris on the 14th of March. This alliance was made known to the Swedish government by a communication from the Austrian ambassador who signed the treaty, Prince Schwarzenburg, accompanied with a proposition from Austria to Sweden, to accede to the treaty. The proposition is said to have been rejected immediately by Sweden, although it was baited with an offer, extending not only to the restoration of Finland, but to the recovery of all the provinces on the Baltic which belonged to Sweden before the conquests of Peter the Great.

*The combination of power which now threatens this country is so formidable that in entering upon the war she can scarcely*

*calculate upon any rational foundation that she will issue from it without loss of territory and of relation.*[1] But it seems to be the genius of war to disappoint the calculations of human foresight. With means far inferior, Frederick the Second of Prussia defeated a coalition of greater power, and the result of our own revolution was equally wide from the prognostications of those statesmen who never reckon, because they cannot foresee, the operations of time and chance. In the war of the Spanish succession the death of one man, and in the seven years war the death of one woman, produced a revolution, not only upon the military aspect of the war, but upon all the political relations and views of the parties, which an hundred battles, and years and years of alternate disasters and mutual destruction, had not been able to accomplish. There is doubtless now existing one individual, upon whose thread of life the destinies of mankind are suspended much more than they could ever be supposed to be upon the life of Joseph I of Austria, or of the Empress Elizabeth. *It is a life too, in the nature of things, more exposed to sudden and violent extinction, than that of ordinary men. Setting aside, however, the accidents which may befall this one person, it now appears that war is certain, and in general that its event must correspond with those of the preceding wars, since the ascendancy of France, in the political situation of Europe, was established on the basis of conscription.*[1]

Mr. Speyer informs me by a letter from Stockholm of 14 April that the Prince Royal had desired him to inform the government of the United States, that England would acknowledge the *neutrality* of Sweden, and that the ports of Sweden would be open for the admission of neutrals and of all sorts of merchandise.[2] A very important question however remains upon my mind, which Mr. Speyer's letter has

[1] Cypher.

[2] Due to Thornton's mission.

not solved, and upon which I have been equally unable to obtain a satisfactory elucidation from the Swedish special mission now here. That is, what England understands by acknowledging the neutrality of Sweden? Whether for instance she intends to allow to Sweden the common rights of neutral commercial intercourse with France and her dependencies? If she does, she must abandon the Orders in Council. If she does not, it is scarcely possible that France should recognize a neutrality of so equivocal a nature.

The Emperor Alexander arrived at Wilna the 14/26 April. Previous to his departure from this city, the forces on the frontiers had been distributed into three armies. The first called the First Army of the West, to the command of which the General of Infantry, Barclai de Tolly was appointed, holding at the same time the office of Minister at War. The second army, called the Army of the Danube, is that which had heretofore been called the Moldavian army, and remains under the command of the General of Infantry, Count Golenischtscheff Kutuzoff. And the third denominated the Second Army of the West, is commanded by the General of Infantry, Prince Bagration. There is no commander in chief, other than the Emperor himself.

The number of troops composing these three armies amounts to upwards of four hundred thousand effective men, in addition to which there are directed to be formed three armies of reserve, consisting of more than one hundred thousand men each. Eighteen new divisions of infantry have been added to the former number of twenty-nine and the divisions of cavalry have been increased from eight to sixteen. In the month of November last a levy of four men to each 500 had been raised, and in March a further levy of two to 500, upon the basis of a new census, was directed. The returns of this census shew the population of the Empire

to be more than forty millions of souls. I am with great respect, etc.

## TO WILLIAM PLUMER

ST. PETERSBURG, 13 May, 1812.

DEAR SIR:

. . . . . .

I had seen since I left the United States only one number of the Boston *Anthology*, but I had known long before that there was nothing to support it but the spirit of faction. The *Port Folio* had for several years lived upon the plunder from the English periodical journals. Of the *Register*[1] I do not recollect having ever known so much as the name until you announced to me the publication of its sixth volume after the death of its editor. I had read one or two of his pamphlets which, although manifesting an extent of knowledge seldom possessed by our political writers, had by no means tended to my edification. Mr. Walsh's learned labors have also reached me. They had proved so acceptable in England that sufficient care had been taken to circulate them from thence upon the continent.

Walsh's talents appear to have excited in America a sort of enthusiasm of delusion which has much abated since the appearance of his first work. His picture of England was utterly false and adapted only to flatter the prejudices of that party among us who, having more money than wit, eagerly snatched at everything which with an assurance of information and argument furnished a prop to their darling delusions. He made a very feeble attempt to extricate himself from the net of his own misrepresentations by a semblance of censure

[1] *American Register*, edited by Charles Brockden Brown.

upon the British administration then in power; but even that line of discrimination, faint as it was, made it impossible for him to pursue *any* system of politics without plunging himself into the most absurd inconsistencies. The true picture of England would have been as dark and odious as he had made that of France. Had he presented it to the public he would have shown an independent spirit and a mind regardful of truth. But his book would have had fewer editions in America and none at all in Europe, and he must have renounced the project of publishing a periodical journal *by subscription.*

The proceedings in Congress having relation to foreign affairs are generally noticed in the English newspapers, and through them I receive information of them from time to time, though occasionally distorted by comments which have their primary source in America. But of the transaction in the state legislatures, and even of their composition as respects parties, I hear little or nothing beyond the result of elections. Your letters have contained the principal information of current politics that have found their way to me. Most of my other friends are deterred from writing by an apprehension which our experience has shown to be too well founded, that their letters if they ever reach me will have been broken open and read by others on their way. The same consideration has often restrained me from writing and will now serve as my excuse to you for saying only what privateersmen and admiralty judges, lieutenants of men of war, and ministers of state, pickpockets and highwaymen by land or by sea, may read without temptation to divert it from its destination or pervert it to their own purposes.

In reflecting upon your observations with regard to the policy of a war with England I am happy to find your opin-

ion perfectly concurring with my own. We want neither provocation nor cause of war. But unfortunately neither the most righteous cause nor the most atrocious provocation are the principal objects of calculation when the question is upon the *policy* of war. They decide indeed the question of its justice, but have very little weight upon that of its prudence. The effect of a war upon our national character and institutions would probably be great and I hope favorable. That we should be destined to enjoy a perpetual peace, however ardently humanity may desire it, can not reasonably be expected. If war is not the natural state of human society at all times, it is that of the age upon which we have fallen. The spirit of ambition, of glory and of conquest burns in Europe with an intenseness beyond all former example. France and England are equally inflamed with it and consuming under it. The present prime minister of England, who appears to be firmly rooted in that station, has openly avowed the purpose of endless war. France, without making the profession, has a government whose temptations to war are far more alluring, and whose success by war has been far more fascinating than those which have inspired the British delirium. The result, however, is the same. War is now the permanent political system of both nations and conquest is the object of both. Neither our distance nor the intervening ocean can or will protect us from the consequences of this European spirit and its application sooner or later to ourselves. It has indeed already been applied *partially* to the only part of our lawful possessions which the power of the belligerents could reach, that is our rights upon the ocean and our commerce. Partially I say, because even yet neither Britain nor France has formally and officially interdicted all neutrality. But they have assumed the principle that neutral commerce depends solely

upon the *toleration* of the belligerents, and they tolerate only as much as they find necessary to their own purposes. If we should abandon our commerce to the plundering of Europe it could not be long before we should be called to defend our territory against them. There are many among us who think we should wait for that moment as the signal for resistance. It may be doubtful whether our commerce is perceptible of defence by war, or worth this inevitable cost at which alone it can be defended. But to stay for the moment of invasion to make preparation against it would greatly increase its dangers and its calamities. Real preparation, therefore, rather than present war appears to be our right policy, and in the idea of preparation I include a deliberate consideration of all our latent resources of our means offensive and defensive and of the spirit necessary to call them forth.

. . . . . .

I am etc.

## TO THOMAS BOYLSTON ADAMS

St. Petersburg, 22 May, 1812.

. . . . . .

Although I do not get newspapers often enough and in variety enough to find them insupportably tedious, the very *caput mortuum* of dulness, yet those that I do get are not always of the right kind to give me the information in which I feel the strongest interest. I receive also a regular file of the *National Intelligencer*, and have it now down to the 25th of February last. The debates in Congress are not what you understand as included in my complaints of dulness, though even among them I find some of my old acquaintance sus-

pended occasionally in the midst of their eloquence by the discovery that there is not a quorum of the House to hear them. But for the last two years I have never had a steady succession of Boston papers, and know very imperfectly the transactions of the Massachusetts legislature. I have even seen only scattered numbers of the *Patriot*, and have read only scattered fragments of the historical correspondence published in it. Your appointment as Chief Justice of the court of Common Pleas I learnt by letters from my mother and from Mr. Plumer of New Hampshire. Mr. Everett wrote me from London that there has been an entire new organization of the courts of Common Pleas, and this was all that I knew about it, until your letter informed me that the Common Pleas were metamorphosed into a Circuit Court, and that your colleagues were Mr. N. Mitchell and Mr. Ware of Wrentham. Others write me that they say nothing of these matters because I shall hear them all from you. And you tell me that you omit them because I shall hear them from others. I am therefore still in a great measure ignorant how big the *spot* of work cut out by the legislature of last year for somebody to do was, though I am very glad that so much of it was to be done by you.

Your Massachusetts election for the ensuing year is at the moment that I write decided. I regret very much that Mr. Gray determined to decline a reëlection. I can indeed conceive that he could not conveniently spare the time which his office necessarily absorbed, but who could be required to sacrifice his time with more reason than Mr. Gray? You have not informed me, neither have I heard from any other source, why the federal candidates of the two preceding years was laid aside, or how the sage of Northampton was prevailed upon to be held up again for the prize of a contested election. Mr. Strong has at least taken no part in these

violent and dangerous councils which produced the elevation of Mr. Gore. He was more cool, more cautious and more moderate during his former administrations than Gore. He made no sacrifices to the frenzy of faction, nor to the most inveterate national enemies of his country. I hope he never encouraged any symptoms of a system for dissolving the Union. Should the event of the Massachusetts election show a new change in the politics of the state, I think it could now have no effect upon the general politics of the nation. But the hands of the federal government would be unhappily weakened at a time when the welfare of the country most imperiously demands that they should be strengthened, with such a state as Massachusetts in opposition to the government of the Union.

The complexion of all the accounts that I have received from America since the meeting of Congress has been warlike, and if war must come it may be as advantageously waged by us at this time as it probably ever can be. The British Orders of Council, the direct cause of war, appear to be more firmly fixed in the system of English policy than ever. The manufacturing towns in the west and the north of England are suffering the natural consequences of this system, and they have begun to show tempers in a shape hideous enough in the eyes of most ministers, but which appears to be viewed with perfect coolness and indifference by Mr. Perceval, in the shape of famine. Liverpool, Nottingham, Leeds, Manchester, Sheffield, all the flourishing towns which had grown and prospered entirely by the intercourse with America, are precisely the places where hunger is now breaking down the stone walls. But Mr. Perceval says it is only because the last year's harvest was a bad one, and has no connection whatever with the Orders in Council; and Mr. Stephen echoed back the word of Mr. Perceval with an elo-

quent panegyric upon that great man. That there is, or very shortly will be, a famine in that part of England seems highly probable. But the soldiers are there to shoot down rioters, men, women or children, and with their aid Perceval will get along until the next harvest. In the meantime there is too much reason to apprehend a new incident in the tragedy of European affairs which will prolong the struggle perhaps for years. There is now a great scarcity of *grain* on this continent as well as in England. In France it approaches already to a famine, but the prospects of the present harvest are good and that country is so situated that even as early as June the soil produces some resources to assist in feeding the people. This country to the very neighborhood of St. Petersburg is a land of grain, and in ordinary times exports large quantities of it. But the scarcity is felt even here and the exportation is prohibited from all the Russian ports in the Baltic. Poland is one of the granaries of Europe. And Mr. Perceval stated during the *last* year grain had been imported from France to the amount of eight millions. It is from America, chiefly if not altogether, that England must now depend for relief from famine, and notwithstanding the promise of a fine harvest in France this year as the consumption of the present season must encroach upon the production of the next. As not only the armies in Spain but the innumerable myriads in the north must be fed while destroying the sources of subsistence, I think it is to say the least extremely probable that for the next year England will obtain no more supply from the continent than she does at present. England never produces grain sufficient for her own consumption. I have heard, but not by information of which I am perfectly sure, that the prospect of harvest this year there is bad. If the scarcity and the dependence upon America should continue

during the next year, it will give us a new hold upon the pacific dispositions of England, of which I hope we shall avail ourselves in the most suitable manner.

. . . . . .

I remain etc.

## TO WILLIAM GRAY

ST. PETERSBURG, 24 May, 1812.

DEAR SIR:

. . . . . .

The property which you sent here last year has I believe all been disposed of except the cotton, the market for which has been during the whole winter irretrievably bad. The exchange upon England has indeed been so favorable for remitting that if the proceeds could safely have been sent to London, it might have been advisable to sell even at the low prices which were to be obtained. At the very time of the year when the exchanges here were wont to be the lowest, they were this last season upon England nearly one hundred per cent above par. They have now fallen again to 13 and 14 pence which allowing for the depreciation of the English paper is only about ten per cent above par. But as it is generally believed that an English subsidy will be to be remitted during the present year, and as a free trade from England is considered as certain, the exchange still continues thus high with the prospect in the course of the summer of rising yet much higher.

Mr. Woodward, after waiting as long as any possibility remained for an improvement of the market here before the opening of this season, determined to try the experiment of another, and sent off by land the largest part of your cotton for Vienna. Several speculations of the same kind

previously undertaken by Americans here have proved successful and there is every reason to believe this will prove so, if the goods can reach the Austrian borders before their introduction is prohibited by the Austrian government. This prohibition is now expected from day to day, and your cotton remains yet exposed to its chances; but if it gets in before the door is shut, the advantage of its expedition will be proportionally great. Messrs. Raimbert and Co. were very reluctant at this undertaking on account of its hazards which were certainly great. Mr. Woodward undertook it against their opinion and upon his own responsibility. But I ought in justice to him to say that he consulted me before he came to the final resolution and took it with my approbation. There was no possible market here. To have kept the cotton here until the summer would have been equivalent to the certainty of a total loss. The chances that it would arrive in Austria before the prohibition should be issued were great and fair. They have indeed become much more unfavorable since it was sent away. The Austrian alliance with France was then not even concluded; here it was not so much as expected. That event has reduced to a certainty the final prohibition (if war should ensue) which was then only probable. The Prussian prohibition had not been issued; that came out on the 16th of April. The choice then was between the certainty of a very heavy loss here and the risk of an unsuccessful adventure and the chance of a very profitable one to Vienna. At the very moment while I am writing I receive a note from Mr. Woodward (who is confined by an indisposition) by which I find that unfortunate delays have occurred in the expediting of the greatest part of your cotton from Moscow, which greatly increase the danger of their arriving too late. Where the fault of this want of diligence is chargeable I cannot undertake to

say. I have constantly supposed that in the *execution* of the business all proper precautions would be taken. They are at last gone from Moscow and I hope, but cannot say confidently, that they will still be in time. I shall continue to pay all the attention to your concerns here in my power. I have often indeed entered into the detail of them to the full extent of what I thought compatible with propriety and delicacy to those who are specially charged with them by you. I shall still do so whenever I shall think your interest can be promoted by it. The caution which I suggested to you in my letter of 12 June last respecting the house of Raimbert and Co. has become doubly necessary in the present state of things. I still confide in *them*. But political revolutions must affect their condition. I am glad you suspended the order to them for making further purchases on your account, and repeat the recommendation of closing all your concerns with them as soon as possible.

. . . . . .

I am etc.

## TO THE SECRETARY OF STATE

No. 85. [JAMES MONROE]

ST. PETERSBURG, 27 May, 1812.

SIR:

On the 16th instant I received your favors of 22nd and 25 February last with a packet of public documents and another enclosing the file of the *National Intelligencer* to 25 February. A few days after I received a letter from Captain Henry,[1] dated at Paris enclosing a letter of introduction of him from

[1] John Henry. See Henry Adams, *History*, VI. 176.

my brother to me, dated at Boston, 29 February. From this and from Mr. Henry's own letter I learned that it had been his intention to visit this country, but that his journey hither is suspended for the present. What the purpose of his intention was I am left to conjecture. The very interesting particulars relating to this gentleman, which form the subject of your dispatch of 22 February have induced me to mention these circumstances to you. But neither my brother's letter of introduction, nor Mr. Henry's letter to me contain the remotest intimation of his communications to the government, nor do they afford a ground for determining whether you were acquainted with his intention to visit Russia.

I have in several of my recent letters, expressed to you the surprise which has been excited throughout Europe, at the course of policy pursued during the last nine or twelve months by Sweden. After the peace of Fredericshamn (October, 1809) there had been until last summer diplomatic missions of the highest rank though without formal character from Russia at Stockholm and from Sweden here. In July last they were on both sides recalled and the relations between the two governments were respectively committed to the care of a chargé d'affaires. The person appointed to that office from Sweden to this court was a Mr. Schinborn, who had resided here many years in a private capacity, had been engaged in many extraordinary transactions, and had long been personally known to the Emperor Alexander. He had gone from this place to Stockholm a few months before the departure of Count Stedingk, the ambassador, and while there had obtained this appointment of chargé d'affaires. Very soon after his return here, by a special appointment of the Emperor, he had a personal interview with his Majesty. At that time there was a new levy of troops in

Sweden, increasing the army of that country to the number of 60,000 men, and the effecting of which had excited serious disturbances and even popular commotions in various parts of the Kingdom. *It is understood that in this conversation the Emperor noticed the circumstance of this armament and expressed his confidence that its object was not to act against Russia. Mr. Schinborn who on such a sudden occasion could not speak with official authority assured his Majesty, however, from his general knowledge of the views of his government that these harbored no hostile intentions against Russia, that they considered Finland as irretrievably gone not only by the cession formally made at the last treaty of peace, but by its natural position so contiguous to the rest of the Russian dominions.*[1]

It was very soon after this that the altercations between the French minister at Stockholm and the Swedish government became so sharp and personal that Mr. Alquier refused to communicate officially with Baron Engestrôm and was finally removed to Copenhagen. Mr. de Cabre was left as chargé d'affaires, and his personal conduct has been unexceptional and conciliatory. In January last the Prince Royal made a report to the king, of the manner in which he had managed the administration during his Majesty's illness. It has doubtless been transmitted to you, and you will have observed the favorable manner in which it mentions the relations between the United States and Sweden. But it took little notice of France, and that little was principally of complaint against the *piracies* of the French privateers in the Baltic. But although the Prince very justly remarked that they were such as *ought* neither to be avowed nor authorized by *any* government, France not only countenanced and supported them but by way of reply to the report, immediately invaded and took possession of Swedish Pomerania

[1] Cypher.

and forcibly incorporated the troops there into her own army. In my letter No. 81 I mentioned to you the substance of a verbal communication from Baron Engestrôm to Mr. de Cabre, on this occasion. It was immediately afterwards put into the form of an official note, and sent to the Swedish chargé d'affaires at Paris with orders to present it to the French government. It arrived there just after the conclusion of the alliance between France and Austria, to which it seems Austria had undertaken to invite Sweden to accede. The Duke of Bassano prevailed upon the Swedish chargé d'affaires to wait for new instructions from his Court before he presented the note; but the Austrian proposition was immediately rejected by Sweden; the forbearance of the chargé d'affaires to present the note has been strongly disapproved and censured, and new and peremptory orders have been dispatched to him to present it without further delay. In the meantime Mr. Thornton, the English negotiator, has been received informally at Stockholm, and there has probably undertaken to pledge the consent of his government to the *neutrality* of Sweden. I mentioned in my last letter my doubts of what England will understand by this neutrality. [*Here two lines of cypher not decyphered*]. If the English Regent's new proclamation respecting the Orders in Council is to elucidate the English meaning of neutrality, [*here three lines of cypher not decyphered*] the roots of that neutrality are not very profound.

Monsieur de Narbonne, a person of high distinction in the diplomatic department of France, after having been some days at Berlin, has been at *Wilna*, where he had an interview with the Emperor Alexander on the 18th instant and left that city the next day. This circumstance has not led to any expectation that the war will be averted. I am with great respect, etc.

## TO ABIGAIL ADAMS

ST. PETERSBURG, 28 May, 1812.

. . . . . .

Letter writing may be called the *trade*, or in old English law and poetical language the *mistery* of persons in my condition. To us therefore it becomes habitually an object of importance to know whether and when the letters we write to our correspondents are received by them, and whether those which are written by them in return are received by us. This may account to you for the formal stiffness with which I number in regular series all the letters that I write you, and for that with which I particularize the time when I receive every one of yours that comes to hand. The receipt of letters from any of my friends is always interesting to my feelings, although their contents must sometimes be, and of late have been peculiarly distressing. From you every letter combines a double and treble interest, and even when long delayed on their passage come with a welcome almost as dear as those which have made the greatest speed.

Your letters continue to remind me of my obligations to superintend personally the education of my eldest boys, and my own heart as constantly reminds me of my other motives for wishing to return home. I have written to have the children sent to me, if they can be sent this year. I have also written to the President expressing my desire not to be left here longer than another winter, which will accomplish the period of absence which he and myself had contemplated when he was pleased to make me the offer of this mission. I have no expectation of enjoying in America the tranquillity, the leisure, or the comforts of various kinds which naturally attend my situation here. My family, too, after my return

will require a sort of provision for which I shall be less prepared than when I left home, and for which I must rely upon a gracious Providence. But as far as I can make up my mind I am satisfied that my *duties* both to my country and to my family beckon me homeward, that I cannot in the nature of things make myself so useful to either of them here as there, and that I must not at their expense consult my own ease or convenience. I regretted much that the opportunity afforded me for returning last summer was necessarily lost though by circumstances the result of which are among my most precious engagements. But I retain all my sentiments and opinions with regard to the office which I declined, and which I hope and trust is filled by a gentleman better fitted for it than I should have been.

Dr. Johnson indulges himself in merriment (portly not to say coarse merriment, such as suited his character) with Milton, for hastening home from Italy at a critical period of his country's troubles to let his zeal and patriotism evaporate in a private school. I think that notwithstanding the Doctor's grave ridicule I shall in this respect follow the example of Milton. My design is to be the schoolmaster of my children, a task for which I am not entirely without experience. I had taught George what I am afraid he had in my absence forgotten, but what I still hope was not entirely lost. John has been too constantly absent from me since he was of an age to learn anything, but I do not intend he shall always be without such instruction as I can give him. Charles I have taken from the beginning. He reads French with ease, and speaks it I believe nearly as well as most French boys of his age. He speaks German too, but without any teaching from me. The English is of the three languages that which he is the most embarrassed in speaking, but I am now teaching him to read it. I flatter myself that with

one year's assiduity more he will read all three as well as persons full grown. After having executed with two of my children the office of the schoolmistress I shall not feel ashamed to assume with them the duties of the schoolmaster. The question does indeed sometimes occur to me whether I do not give them time which might be more usefully employed? Possibly there are meditations more sublime and occupations more *liberal* to which my vacant hours might be dedicated. But there is an attraction in these more powerful than in the others, and no positive and commanding sense of duty has hitherto diverted me from them.

You will ere this have ample reason to be convinced that Mr. J's rule of taking the exact counterpart of England's interest for the anticipation of her practical policy is not likely to fail at this time.[1] The Regent since the restrictions upon his authority have expired has pursued a course equally unexpected to his former friends and adversaries. It is perhaps too soon to pronounce definitely upon its character. Louis XII did not avenge the injuries of the Duke of Orleans. The sovereign of Britain buries in oblivion the animosities of the heir apparent. In this point of view he might say like Harry the Fifth in Shakespeare that

> Consideration like an angel came
> And whipped the offending Adam out of him.

But other motives and other impulses are attributed to his present conduct which, if true, exhibit him in a light far less heroical. These are not merely circulated in the whispers of private scandal, they have been proclaimed by a peer of the realm in open Parliament, and in language the most ener-

[1] "Mr. Jefferson used to say, it was only necessary to consider what was the true policy of England, and you might be sure that she would act directly contrary to it." *Abigail Adams to John Quincy Adams*, February 11, 1812. Ms.

getic and indignant—uncontradicted. So that the only change yet discovered at the head of that government is an individual unprotected by that wall of brass which amidst the innumerable errors and miseries and calamities of the late reign surrounded and defended the person of the sovereign—a respected private character. There is no symptom of a change of policy towards America.

Of France, and Russia, and the European continent, I shall say nothing, and would to heaven there were little to be said! You will hear enough and too much by public report. Though we had a snowstorm here last Monday, being the 25th day of May, we have now what passes in this country for summer. I long for the *pleasure rustication* which we enjoyed the last season, but they are luxuries with which I cannot indulge myself. We are to pass the summer in the city. . . .

## TO LEVETT HARRIS

ST. PETERSBURG, 4 June, 1812.

SIR:

I did not say that you had allowed last year an entry into this port of ships under the American flag *which you knew were not American but English ships.*

From the tone and style of expression which you thought proper to assume with me at my house, in answer to the representations I was making to you in behalf of unfortunate and injured American seamen, entitled to your protection, I am not surprised that you misunderstood what I did say.

## TO THE CREW OF THE "MONTICELLO" AT CRONSTADT

I have received your letter and have represented to Mr. Harris your complaints. If your wages are at all recoverable it must be through his means and those of Mr. Sparrow.

If you go away without recovering them, you will do well to leave your demands for them liquidated with Mr. Harris, or with some person who may hereafter recover them for you. My advice to those of you who are real Americans is, not to ship in any vessel which came here with false American colors.

I am your friend and well-wisher

ST. PETERSBURG, June 4, 1812.

## TO LEVETT HARRIS

SIR:

I have made no specific charge against you. I neither am nor wish to be your accuser.

If, after the manner in which you chose to denounce to me the total dissolution of all relations between you and me, you still have doubts whether your tone and expressions were such as I have high and just reason to be offended with, I perceive no claim that you can have to a written specification of the facts I had stated and the sentiments I had expressed to you which may have given you displeasure. A correspondence of altercation and reproach is quite unnecessary, and between us would be very improper after all other relations between us have ceased.

ST. PETERSBURG, 4 June, 1812.

## TO LEVETT HARRIS

St. Petersburg, 4 June, 1812.

Sir:

I accept with pleasure your apology and beg you to be assured that as the interruption of our friendly and confidential relations has given me sincere concern, and their dissolution would be to me cause of serious regrets, so nothing could be more agreeable to me than their entire restoration.

I have assured you that *accusation* was by no means the object of the remarks which I made with warmth indeed, but without any disposition of unkindness to you. Specification in writing was therefore needless for your defence; but in candid and amicable explanation I should have been, and am yet, willing to give it. You will recollect the repeated applications which have been made both in writing and individually *to me* by numbers of American seamen belonging to the vessels which arrived here last summer under false American colors. I have always referred them to you as to the only person who could procure for them justice or relief. I had received repeated complaints from them that means were using to compel them to ship in the same vessels, or some of them which had been seized for coming with those false papers. I had the day before you called received a letter from the crew of the *Monticello* stating anew their complaints, and adding that they were refused a pass. I had seen the same morning three of the men who stated to me that Mr. Sparrow had attempted to prevent them from coming to St. Petersburg, and that it was only by an express order from the Admiral to whom they appealed, that they obtained the permission. You read me part of a letter from Mr. Sparrow in which those men were spoken of as if they

were culpable and deserving severity for insisting upon what appeared to me not unreasonable. I thought them injured men who, even if no relief could be obtained for them, deserved better usage. I was displeased at the manner in which Mr. Sparrow mentioned them, and gave you to understand it. You assumed to yourself the whole of Mr. Sparrow's proceedings on this occasion, and expressed dissatisfaction at the impression which I entertained of them. Then indeed, though with great pain to myself, I was led to observations which personally touched your feelings, and which might assume in your mind the appearance of charges, though solely meant by me as expostulation. You expressed yourself in terms of disdain at imputations upon your character. You asserted your entire independence of any accountability to me in your official capacity (in which respect you were certainly correct as to the fact). You declared you would not suffer such imputations from me. The rest I wish no longer to remember.

I beg you now to consider what I have here said not as intended for reproach, or to renew discussion so unpleasant to us both. It is merely to account to you for the origin of those reflections which gave you pain and the effect of which I regret no less than you. I retain my sentiments with respect to Mr. Sparrow's letter. I still think that the unfortunate seamen so shamefully kidnapped to this country, unable to obtain either their discharge or their wages, burthened with debts contracted for the necessaries of life, and turned adrift upon the street, did not deserve to be treated as mutineers for merely claiming their right. I am willing to believe Mr. Sparrow's asperity towards them to have arisen merely from inconsideration, and would gladly be convinced that it was entirely without your participation. I should have needed no such conviction had you not in the most

explicit terms declared that Sparrow did nothing but execute your orders. You have long known my principles with regard to the rights, the claims and the complaints of *common seamen*, that though often troublesome, occasionally turbulent and sometimes unjust, they are by no means always wrong. I may add that in the present case they appear to me eminently entitled to regard.

Two of those men have been again to me this day. They say that Mr. Sparrow refuses to arrest the captain of the *Monticello* without orders from you. They say further that Marks is shipping men for the vessel in which he came, while the wages of all his men are still unpaid. They think that if Sall was personally arrested their wages would be paid. I know nothing as to the correctness of their opinion, but I have no reason to disbelieve their statements of facts.

If a more particular explanation of any expression used by me can tend to give you satisfaction, I will give it verbally or in writing as you may desire. In the meantime I remain with due consideration and esteem your very humble and obedient servant.

## TO THE SECRETARY OF STATE

No. 86. [JAMES MONROE]

ST. PETERSBURG, 11 June, 1812.

SIR:

The political drama in the north of Europe is drawing towards its catastrophe. Nearly two months have elapsed since the Emperor Alexander left his capital. On the 9th of May the French Emperor, accompanied by his Empress, quitted his residence at St. Cloud. They arrived on the 16th

of the same month at Dresden, and on the 18th were met there by the Emperor and Empress of Austria. The King of Westphalia had preceded them, and was at Warsaw, waiting the arrival of his brother. The king of Naples arrived at Berlin on the 18th and the Viceroy of Italy had passed through Dresden 10 days before. The Emperor of Austria is accompanied by Count Metternich his Minister of Foreign Affairs, and by Prince Schwarzenberg his ambassador at the French court. The Duke of Bassano is with the Emperor Napoleon. I mentioned in my last that the Count de Narbonne, an aide de camp general of the Emperor of France, had been with a letter (said to be merely complimentary) from him to the Emperor Alexander at Wilna. Since then Prince Trubetzkoi, an officer of the same rank, has been dispatched by the Emperor of Russia, from Wilna with the answer.

It is impossible for me to give you precise information of what is passing at Wilna. Rumors founded upon such private correspondence as can be transmitted rise and fall in daily succession—mere exhalations of the night, which the morning sun again disperses. Sometimes they portend war, and sometimes negotiation. Of material facts, none are public excepting such as in their nature admit not of concealment. The principal persons who accompanied the Emperor to Wilna, or followed him thither by his orders were the Councillor Count Romanzoff, Count Kotschubey a member of the Council and President of the Department of Legislation, Admiral Tchitchagoff, Count Arakcheieff, formerly Minister of War and now a general of artillery and President of the War Department in the Council, Baron Armfeldt, the new Secretary General of the Empire, Vice Admiral Shishkoff, and the Minister of the Police, Lieutenant General Balaschoff. Immediately after his arrival

at Wilna, the Emperor paid a visit in person to General Bennigsen, at his country seat in the neighborhood of that city, where since the peace of Tilsit he had lived in retirement. Shortly afterwards General Bennigsen was ordered to be in attendance upon his Majesty, but has hitherto had no specific command assigned to him. The governor of Moscow, Field Marshal Gudovich, has been removed, and in his place General Kutuzoff who commanded the Army of the Danube has been appointed. Prince Labanoff, who was one of the Russian ambassadors at the peace of Tilsit, has also been removed from the Government of Riga. During the Emperor's absence from St. Petersburg, the Presidency of the Imperial Council, which had been held until then by Count Romanzoff, was committed to Field Marshal Count Nicholas Soltikoff, formerly the Emperor's governor, and the direction of the Department of Foreign Affairs, as I have already informed you, to Count Alexander Soltikoff, his son. General Wiasmitinoff, formerly Minister at War, was appointed military governor of St. Petersburg in place of Minister of Police Balaschoff.

The selection of persons to attend the Emperor, and the appointments at and since his departure are considered as symptoms indicative of the probable result. In the country there are political parties, and vicious rivalries, and personal animosities, perhaps not the less violent and inveterate, for being much cramped and restricted in the expression of their sentiments and purposes. *Count Romanzoff, who since the peace of Tilsit has been considered as the most confidential minister of the Emperor, naturally has a multitude of adversaries and who are all those who have strong attachments to England or to the English cause. It is universally expected that a war with France will be the signal for his retirement.*[1]

[1] Cypher.

Perhaps among the chief personages, whose wishes tend to that event, there are some who desire it more from the persuasion that this will be one of its first inevitable consequences than from any other motive. As the Count's anxious wishes that the peace may yet be preserved are well known, the eagerness for his removal increases, as the prospect of war approaches; and since his absence scarcely a day had passed without rumors that he had resigned his office, and of supposed appointments of other persons to succeed him. He was taken ill, immediately after his arrival at Wilna, and several days severely indisposed. Here it was immediately reported that his illness was a stroke of apoplexy, and though afterwards contradicted, this report still maintains its credit. By the most recent accounts, however, it is certain that he retains his office, and has so far recovered his health as to transact business as usual. *It is understood that his opinions and counsel, as well as those of Count Kotschubey, are still of a pacific tendency, but that the other advisers attending the Emperor have an opposite leaning. This disposition is especially attributed to Baron Armfeldt a person who has* [1] long been known in the history of the present times, but who has very recently become a Russian subject. He was a Swedish nobleman, a native of the province of Finland, lately ceded to Russia, and where his principal possessions are situated. Conformably to an article of the treaty he has elected to transfer his allegiance, and has been treated by the Emperor with the highest personal distinction and favor. These honors and dignities are not unenvied, and perhaps he may be made in the public opinion peculiarly responsible for perilous advice, which others may have given as readily as himself. Whether from the habits of his education, or the features of his personal character, he is less reserved in

[1] Cypher.

the free and open avowal of his general sentiments and opinions, *than is customary among the original Russians, and he has taken no pains to conceal or disguise his impressions in relations to France.*[1]

Count Löwenhielm, the king of Sweden's aide de camp, who had been here some months on a special mission, left this city last week to join the Emperor at Wilna. Mr. Thornton has laid aside his incognito, and appears openly at Örebro the seat of the Swedish Diet. It is said from Stockholm that he is negotiating a treaty of commerce, but there is no symptom of the revocation of the British Orders in Council. Mr. Prevost, a secretary of the French embassy here, was despatched as a courier immediately after the Emperor Alexander left this city. He had not time to reach Paris, but met the French Emperor at Mentz, followed him to Dresden, and from thence was sent back as a courier to the ambassador here. He arrived last week, and immediately after he came, the ambassador, Count Lauriston, applied for passports to go to *Wilna.* Count Soltikoff not being authorized to grant them, immediately sent a courier with the request to the Emperor. The answer is expected this day or tomorrow.

The first arrivals of vessels from the United States at Cronstadt this season was on the 8th instant, since which the number arrived amounts to ten. The commercial prospects of the present summer are not favorable to the adventurers.

I am with great respect, etc.

[1] Cypher.

## TO JOHN ADAMS

ST. PETERSBURG, 12 June, 1812.

MY DEAR SIR:

Within a few days I have received your kind favors of 19 February and 10 December last, the first of which was forwarded to me by Mr. Hall from Gothenburg, and the last by Mr. Russell from London. Mr. Hall came from Boston to Gothenburg, and has since arrived here in the *Minerva*, a vessel belonging to Mr. W. R. Gray. He brought your letter of 19 February, and although from thence he transmitted it by the post, I believe it had not been opened before it came to my hands. Mr. Russell informs me that your letter of 10 December, together with one of 8 December from my dear mother, were inclosed originally under cover to Mr. Barlow. That they were taken by an English cruiser on board the ship *John*, bound from Baltimore to Bordeaux, and were opened at the Admiralty Court in London. How far Sir William Scott was edified by your remarks upon the liberties which the gentlemen called emperors and kings take with the correspondence of us republicans I have not learnt, but it seems he was willing to give another proof of the *generosity* of the world by permitting the letter to be taken out of his court, and forwarded to its true destination after having had the benefit of reading it himself.

In the days of Demosthenes we read that the republican Athenians once intercepted certain letters from that *gentleman*, King Philip of Macedon, with whom they were at war, and who was but too successfully plotting their destruction. The public letters they naturally and justly considered as lawful prizes, but when they came to that for Olympias, they transmitted it to her unopened and untouched. This I think

may pass for generosity; more generosity than I am afraid the admiralty courts of any modern state, monarchical or republican, would ever display. Why is it that for an example of that delicacy and decorum of manners which mankind in all ages have admired and celebrated, we must look back five centuries before Christianity and to a pure democracy?

I shall follow your advice and be very careful of my opinions of the common law. One of my motives for declining a judicial station was to avoid the *duty* of producing them to the public in a manner which might have a tendency to disturb the public tranquillity. I have neither weight of influence nor energy of character enough to undertake the reformation of the *moral* and *legal* code of my country, though I think I have discernment enough to perceive defects in them which a man like those "qu'on ne trouve plus que dans les vies du Plutarque" might reform. When the present Mr. John Lowell took his second degree at Cambridge (Anno Domini 1789) he delivered a part in a forensic dispute, in which he said that with regard to any principles relating to the liberties of the people you might as well take the *odes of the poet laureate* for an authority as Blackstone's "Commentaries." This was about the time too when Mr. Harrison Gray Otis said in a public oration to the town of Boston, that words only made the difference between Punic faith and British plausibility. English laws and English virtue were not at that time in high repute at Harvard and Faneuil Halls. Now it would not be safe at either of those places to utter such opinions. I know not that I ever could have concurred in them to the full extent. The common law has some admirable institutions, some excellent principles, and many valuable usages which our countrymen enjoy. God forbid they should ever be deprived of them or

become disgusted with them. For the sake of the good contained in them I had rather tolerate much infirmity and much evil connected, perhaps, inseparably with them, than launch forth upon innovation which I could not control and which might sweep away good and evil without discrimination.

I perceive by the newspapers and other publications from America that the supreme judicial court of Massachusetts have decided that the common law does not apply to that Commonwealth in *certain cases* of libel, and that the governor of the State questions the propriety of their decision. As represented by him it appears to me so extraordinary that although I have no reason to doubt his accuracy I feel under an absolute necessity of hesitating in my assent to his conclusions. For the protection of individual good name against defamation, one law for members of the legislature and the supreme executive, and another law for judges and officers not eligible by the people! Is that the constitution of Massachusetts? Is that the nature of our government? Divers weights, a great and a small! divers measures, a great and a small! And this law *subtilized* out of the Massachusetts constitution by judges upon the bench! A hedge for themselves, and the unsheltered tempest for others! Can these things be? Your extract of the letter from Monticello gave me pleasure. As to the works not having so much vogue as an author's paternal feelings might wish, I shall easily reconcile time to its destiny. Had it been more successful it would certainly have allowed me less future tranquillity. That it should have no artificial bolstering from caballing friends or puffers I was fully determined. From the natural decision of the public upon its merits I shall not appeal. . . .

## TO THE SECRETARY OF STATE

No. 88. [JAMES MONROE]

ST. PETERSBURG, 25 June, 1812.

SIR:

The continuance of the commercial treaty between Portugal and Russia of 1798 for three years, which I mentioned in my last letter, was concluded in the form of a declaration, a copy of which I have now the honor to enclose. The alteration in the 6th article is conformable to the regulation of the last year, and the motive for it was explained in my letter to you of 29 April, 1811.

The reason assigned for the refusal of passports to the French Ambassador to go to Wilna was the stoppage of the letters at the frontiers, and it was also mentioned that passports had been refused to Prince Kurakin at Paris. The state of the facts has been mentioned to me to be these: At the time when the Emperor Napoleon left St. Cloud upon his journey *for the inspection of his troops*, Prince Kurakin applied to the Duke of Bassano for passports for himself and his family. The Duke suggested to him that unless he had orders from his government to ask for them it would be most advisable to wait, rather than insist upon this measure, which would at least have the appearance of a rupture; when it might perhaps yet be avoided. The Prince acquiesced; but after the arrival of the Emperor Napoleon at Dresden, applied a second time for passports, without stating that it was by order of his government. It seems that the passports for all his family were then granted, but with respect to his own, he was requested to state that he was directed by his government to ask for it. He applied for it, however, a third time; and this application was accompanied with an official

note declaring that the Emperor Alexander considered the total evacuation by the French troops of all the Prussian territories, as an indispensable preliminary to all negotiation,[1] and that should that proposal be complied with, he would commission some person with the necessary powers to treat concerning an indemnity for the Duchy of Oldenburg. Immediately on the receipt of this note by the Emperor Napoleon, Prince Kurakin's passport was sent him, with an intimation from the Duke of Bassano, that to the note itself no other answer would be returned. At the same time an order was dispatched to Count Lauriston, the French Ambassador here, to demand his passports for himself and all the persons attached to the Embassy. On the 23rd instant, the day before yesterday, he made the application to Count Soltikoff, and received for answer that the demand had been dispatched to the Emperor at Wilna. The answer may be received in six days more, but may possibly be delayed until Prince Kurakin shall have reached the frontier. The Austrian, Wurtemberg and Westphalian envoys, and the Prussian, Saxon and Bavarian chargé d'affaires applied for their passports at the same time with the ambassador, and have received the same provisional answer.

*The ambassador told me that the Duke of Bassano had sent him an English newspaper containing almost word for word the substance of Prince Kurakin's last note, a paper printed too before the note was presented. From this circumstance it is obvious the French government [regard] the intercourse between Russia and England as having been previously concerted between the parties, a fact of which I have for some time had little doubt myself, though it has been constantly denied on both sides from sources which powerful facts could have constrained me to distrust.*

[1] See p. 362, *infra*.

*Of these last incidents preceding the rupture my information is from the first hand, but it may possibly be colored by the feelings of the moment or by the natural prejudices of the party. On the other side I have reported to you what Count Romanzoff said to me the day before his departure for Wilna. Certainly negotiation then was his wish and expectation.* [Nine lines of this paragraph not decyphered.]

*I have repeatedly mentioned to you as a suggestion from an indirect but usually authentic source that a proposition had at least been hinted from France to Russia that to secure the effectual operation of the continental system the Russian ports on the Baltic must be garrisoned by French troops. From one of the most influential members of the Russian Imperial Council, and from one of the most judicious and esteemed ministers from a member of the Rhenish confederation, I have had assurances the most explicit,* that no such proposal from France had been made or even intimated, *while at the same time I was assured by another minister of the* [*blank*] *that it had. The first statement of it that I saw was in an English newspaper to which I gave no credit. I mentioned it to the French ambassador, who treated it as an idle rumor but without explicitly denying it. Within a very few weeks, and long since the departure of the Emperor, he has declared to me that no proposition of a nature dishonorable to Russia had been made, and he added with an emphasis of manner corresponding to the force of the words, "Je puis vous protester que la nègociation est encore vierge." Notwithstanding which there are in the Duke of Bassano's report of 10th March last very strong indications that such had been, or to say the least such would be, the French* [1] [remainder of letter with exception of few lines undecyphered.] I am with great respect, etc.

[1] Cypher.

## TO JOHN ADAMS

ST. PETERSBURG, 29 June, 1812.

MY DEAR SIR:

I inclose you a press copy of my last letter, though it is more than ever uncertain whether either the original or the copy will be suffered to reach you. We have lived in eventful times, but in the course of my life I have no recollection of a moment so full of portent as the present. We have accounts here from the United States to 9 May by the way of England. They are more immediately warlike than I expected or could have wished. It has indeed long been my conviction, even from the time when I participated so strongly in the former embargo, that the British Orders in Council unless abandoned would inevitably produce a war between us and England; and in looking back it is an extraordinary demonstration of our extreme reluctance to engage in this war that we have averted it for nearly five years. That England will abandon them without a war is extremely doubtful yet; but there are circumstances upon which I have wished to found a hope that with a little more patience and forbearance we shall see the downfall of that infamous compound of robbery, perjury and fraud by the weight of its mischief recoiling upon its authors, without being obliged on our part to resort to force for its destruction.

The most powerful patron and supporter of the Orders in Council Mr. Perceval, First Lord of the Treasury and Chancellor of the Exchequer, was murdered within the walls of the House of Commons on the 11th of last month by an individual of disordered mind, but not mad enough to be absolved from the punishment of the laws. Perceval's administration, which even before his death was struggling

against the weight of a strong and growing opposition, was unable to support itself after his decease. They endeavored to recruit their force by taking in Wellesley and Canning as subalterns under them, but were refused. The House of Commons passed a vote to address the Regent and ask him to form a new administration, with a friendly hint how it was to be formed. Wellesley, and Moira, and Canning, and the opposition, and the wrecks of the Perceval ministry, were alternately manœuvering, mining, countermining, and protracting, resigning and resuming, and publishing in the newspapers, as if they were throwing dice or turning cards for the executive authority. This state of interregnum or anarchy continued to the date of our last accounts, 5 June. I had flattered myself when the survivors of the Perceval administration resigned, that their successors would immediately remove the great stumbling block, the Orders in Council, and that we should be saved thereby from the impending war. But the formation of the new ministry lingers so long that I now forbode little or nothing good from the issue of the struggle. The Perceval policy appears likely to maintain its ascendency yet a little longer, long enough I fear to produce that catastrophe from which we have so long endeavored to preserve ourselves, but in which it seems the will of Heaven that we should be involved.

At the same time while this drama draws towards a tragical conclusion, another still more terrible in its aspect is opening in the north of Europe. Russia there stands arrayed against the united forces of France, Germany and Italy. The parties have been two years assembling against each other the whole power it was possible for them to put in motion, and last week the hostilities commenced by an invasion of the Russian territories in Poland. The *French*,

*Austrian*, *Spanish*, *Neapolitan*, *Saxon*, *Bavarian*, *Würtemburg* and *Westphalian* ministers, and other diplomatic agents at this court, have all asked for passports and are on the eve of departure. The Russian ambassador at Paris has done the same, and before this must be out of France. One of the greatest causes of this war, indeed, in my opinion its only immediate cause, is the same British Orders in Council which have bred the war between our country and England. The expectation of this explosion also may contribute to procrastinate the final ministerial arrangements in England.

It was but yesterday that the account of the first hostilities in Poland reached this city. No event of importance is yet known to have occurred, but it is believed impossible that many days should pass without a shock such as perhaps is unparalleled even in the sanguinary modern annals of Europe. What its event will be human wisdom cannot foresee, but here it is a moment of profound and gloomy anxiety. And what singularly characterizes the period is that, prodigious as the armaments and preparations have been on both sides, not an intimation has been given to the public on either side of any misunderstanding between them. Russia has declared and adhered to the determination not to begin the war; but on the subject of the difference which had arisen between them there has been a persevering refusal on her part to negotiate at all, the motive for which will doubtless now be assigned, but which as yet is unaccountable. The opinion prevails here that Sweden will be in alliance with Russia, but the professed desire of Sweden is to remain neutral. She rejected great offers made to her to join in the alliance of France and Austria, and gave the first notice of that alliance here. She has made her own peace with England, upon the promise that England would acquiesce in her *neutrality*. But it does not appear that by this was

understood the revocation of the Orders in Council, without which there can be no neutrality.

The publication of the documents communicated to our government by Mr. Henry took place very shortly after the date of your letter of 19 February. I perceive by the Boston newspapers that the federalists there wish Mr. Henry's evidence to be construed as a testimony to their *political* virtue, and he certainly has taken pains to have it understood that he did not intend to expose the individuals with whom he treated. You observe that the tory projects of H. and P. were not to be dreaded. I have perhaps thought them more formidable than they were, but Mr. Henry's mission and his letters have given further countenance to my opinions. If the leaders of the Massachusetts and Connecticut legislatures in 1809 were not ripe for open and avowed negotiation with Henry, it was evidently not owing to any scruples of their own, but to their fears that the people would not go with them in their plan of rebellion. Henry's letters throw a new and powerful light on the compilation entitled *Works of Fisher Ames*. It was published while Henry was in Boston, and I knew at the time that an extraordinary number of copies were purchased for the express purpose of extensive circulation in the state of Vermont.[1]

[1] "Of this mission of Henry, your son had got wind in the time of the embargo and communicated it to me. But he had learned nothing of the particular agent, although, of his workings, the information he had obtained appears now to have been correct. He stated a particular which Henry has not distinctly brought forward, which was that the Eastern States were not to be required to make a formal act of separation from the Union, and to take a part in the war against it; a measure deemed much too strong for their people; but to declare themselves in a state of neutrality, in consideration of which they were to have peace and free commerce, the lure most likely to insure popular acquiescence. Having no indications of Henry as the intermediate in this negotiation of the Essex junto, suspicions fell on Pickering, and his nephew Williams, in London. If he was wronged in this, the ground of the suspicion is to be found in his known practices and avowed

If you have not read that book I beg you to procure it, and cast your eye upon it with the recollection of the time when it was given to the public, the manner in which it was published, and the tendencies of its doctrines, to the state of popular sentiments to which the object of Henry's mission was adapted. The present time is less favorable for the British intrigue to dismember our Union than that was, but whenever we have a war with England, we shall have to contend against an internal struggle of the same spirit. God grant that it may be suppressed without blood. I trust in God it will be suppressed.[1]

Ever faithfully yours.

## TO THE SECRETARY OF STATE

No. 91. [JAMES MONROE]

ST. PETERSBURG, 11 July, 1812.

SIR:

There was an inaccuracy in the statement of circumstances immediately preceding the rupture between France and Russia contained in my No. 88 *which in a more recent*

opinions, as that of his accomplices in the sameness of sentiment and of language with Henry, and subsequently by the fluttering of the wounded pigeons." *Jefferson to John Adams*, April 20, 1812, *Writings of Jefferson* (Ford), VIII. 347.

[1] War with Great Britain was declared by act of Congress June 18, 1812.

"In resorting to war against Great Britain as the United States has done by inevitable necessity, *it is their desire and hope that it may be confined to her.*

"It is seen with much regret that the Emperor of Russia is also likely to be reduced to the necessity of becoming a party to the war, if he has not already done it. Should that event take place there is no reason why it should affect in the slightest degree the very friendly relations which now exist between the United States and Russia. *It is the serious desire of this government to preserve to their utmost extent those relations with that power.*" *Secretary of State to John Quincy Adams*, July 1, 1812. Ms. Italics represent cypher.

*conversation with the late French ambassador I have perceived, and* [1] which, in the wish to give you the most precise information, I think it proper to notice. The proposition made by Russia to France "that the French troops should evacuate Prussia and Swedish Pomerania, and withdraw *beyond the Elbe*, as a preliminary to negotiation upon the points at variance between the two governments," was made, not with Prince Kurakin's third demand for passports, but at a prior period. It was dispatched from hence a short time before the Emperor Alexander's departure, and in the first instance was communicated by Prince Kurakin, with a letter of complimentary form, from his sovereign to the Emperor Napoleon. He is said to have listened very coolly to the proposition as made by Prince Kurakin, and to have said in answer, "C'est forte bien! J'aime qu'on me parle franchement," at the same time referring the Prince to the Duke of Bassano, for the official notice of his determination. It is added, that there was so much calmness in his manner, that the Russian ambassador entertained some hopes that the proposal would be complied with. But on repeating it in form to the Duke of Bassano the Duke told him that he should not answer it, because such a proposition could admit of no other formal answer than a declaration of war. That if it had been made, as the basis of a negotiation, it would have been unobjectionable; but to comply with it, dictated as a preliminary after the engagements France had made with the king of Prussia, and when the French troops were on the banks of the Vistula, would be *dishonorable*. France could neither hearken nor reply to it. Then it was that the Emperor Napoleon resolved upon his departure, and that Prince Kurakin first asked for his passports without saying that it was by order of his

[1] Cypher.

government. The statement of the preliminary terms, required by Russia *which appeared in the English newspapers was not therefore as I had at first understood prior in date to Prince Kurakin's communication of them to the French government, but it was so nearly at the same time as to have produced in the Emperor Napoleon's mind the conviction suggested in my letter, and in no small degree aggravated his irritation.*[1]

It appears that the Minister General of the Police, Balaschoff, had been sent from Wilna to the Emperor Napoleon's headquarters only two days before the commencement of hostilities. It is scarcely possible but that he should have been charged with some other propositions than the final one of Prince Kurakin. What they were, however, has not yet been made known. It is circulated here that the Emperor Alexander, previous to his departure, formally pledged himself that he would enter into no negotiation with France, unless the French troops should be first withdrawn from Prussia and beyond the Elbe. The refusal of passports to the French ambassador to go to Wilna for the purpose of negotiating was probably founded upon the same determination. I have reported to you the *tone* of opinions which were very assiduously maintained here by certain persons intimately connected with the court: that France was reduced to the extremity of distress; that Napoleon would not *dare* to begin this war; that he could not begin it if he would. How far the measures of the Russian cabinet were stiffened by ideas of this description, I cannot expressly say; but in the transactions between independent states, I know not of an expedient in human contrivance more effectual to defeat all possible arrangement, than for one party to require of the other, as a preliminary to negotiation, a public act

[1] Cypher.

shrinking from its own ground previously taken. A memorable example in our own recent history has not a little contributed to show the character and tendency of such propositions.

I shall enclose with this letter the several short narratives of the events which have occurred since the commencement of the war, published by official authority here. They merely represent the Russian armies as having retreated for the purpose of uniting their forces previous to a general action, and as having proceeded hitherto almost without annoyance in effecting this operation. A considerable extent of country has thus been for a time abandoned to the invader, but as the strength and resources of the country are unimpaired, the spirit of the people here is rather acquiring than losing confidence and encouragement.

An English negotiator, a Mr. Smith, is said to have arrived at the Emperor Alexander's headquarters while they were at Wilna; and since the campaign commenced a Mr. Novosiltzoff has been dispatched from them to England.

The French ambassador, and the allied ministers who asked for their passports, at the same time with him, have now received them, after the application had been three times renewed. Mr. Rayneval, the first secretary of the French embassy, was dispatched as a courier, and was furnished by Count Soltikoff with a passport as such; but was nevertheless stopped at Mittau, and not permitted to proceed. The mails from France and Germany have all been stopped, and nothing is known here of the movements of the French armies excepting what is mentioned in the handbills of which translations are enclosed. The three first of these handbills though dated from headquarters, did not mention where they were. This circumstance occasioned rumors that they had been transferred to the northern bank of the Dwina, which

is proved by the fourth handbill to have been a mistake. I am with great respect, etc.

## TO ABIGAIL ADAMS

St. Petersburg, 13 July, 1812.

The political condition of the world not only engrosses all our thoughts, but absorbs all our faculties. A new war is just blazing out in the country where I reside, and within three days distance of where I am. I have been nearly three years observing its causes and witnessing its approaches with the deep concern that a common feeling of humanity, strengthened by the peculiar interest in favor of this nation which my situation rendered so natural, could not fail to inspire. I long cherished the hope that some unforeseen event, some special and providential interposition, would avert a conflict, from the issue of which I could augur nothing propitious to mankind, but which the process of time appeared to be bringing on with almost the regularity and certainty of the revolutions of the spheres. It has not so seemed good to that Providence whose ways, however dark, are wise and merciful. The trial by battle is upon its issue, and the destinies of the civilized world are once more staked upon its events.

With a still more anxious and painful sentiment I have seen during the same period, and partly from the same causes, the same scourge of war suspended over my own country. There, too, the natural and seemingly inevitable result of the passing events was war, and there I more fondly indulged the hope of some sudden and unexpected light to arise from darkness which the volume of sacred inspiration promises to *the upright*. When the frantic hand of an assas-

sin, without apparent motive and without accomplice, cut short the days of the man whom I considered as the only necessary producer and efficient author of this war,[1] the first sentiment which succeeded that of horror at the deed which sent him so instantly to his account was that of a reviving wish, which was at that moment nearly extinct, that this very act might in its consequences snatch my country from that calamity which to all human appearance has become unavoidable. After an interval of more than a month wasted in cabals and intrigues, and serving only to prove the irreconcilable discussions between the leaders of the various parties squabbling for the government of England, another event as unexpected as the first, but consequent upon it, has again cheered me with an additional gleam of hope, which would even be strong and vivid but for the apprehension that the ardors and impatience of indignation at our wrongs may have precipitated measures on our part which may yet involve us in that conflict, from which we have no otherwise the prospect of being happily extricated.

On the 16th of June the death blow was given in the British House of Commons to that political pestilence which has been raging nearly five years under the denomination of the Orders in Council.[2] Their revocation has been extorted with the most extreme reluctance from the remnants of the very same ministry by which they were enacted, extorted by the cries of famine which it had spread over their own people, and by the fear of that convulsive desperation produced among them by it. As if determined to display before all mankind the clear unequivocal and unanswerable demonstration of the *efficacy* of commercial restrictions in America to control the willful and wanton injustice of a British administration, they persisted in maintaining this

[1] Spencer Perceval.

[2] See Henry Adams, *History*, VI. 267.

infamous system until the proofs that thousands upon thousands of their manufacturers were starving under its operation had been exhibited in the minutest detail by the concurrent and uncontradicted evidence of an inquiry of many weeks, daily pursued. They then in a manner, as awkward and ungracious as that with which they had before adhered to their folly, declared their intentions to abandon it, and with one and the same breath avowed that they yielded only to the gasping hunger of their people, and that they meant to clog their concession with conditions which America is under no obligation to grant, and some of which she will probably reject. There is even now an appearance of insincerity in their mode of proceeding, indicating that they have a trickish purpose to get the American markets open to relieve their people, and then to enforce again their piratical orders. But as I believe the American government is more than a match for them at negotiation, and as they now confess they *must* negotiate, I have no doubt they will be driven from this skulking hole as they have from all their strongholds by the address and sagacity they will have to treat with, if by a commencement of hostilities on our part their lingering and forced compliance should not now come too late.

My principal anxiety, therefore, now is for what may have been done in America. The embargo of last April was applied at the moment when its power was most effectual and was I strongly believe, the wrenching stroke to the stubbornness of the British ministers. Everything that preceded viewed as preparatory for war was of similar tendency, and the publication of Henry's correspondence was not lost upon the two present heads of the administration. But I hear so much said foreboding a declaration of war, or an actual commencement of hostilities by us, that

I am uneasy lest in the moment of hurry to show the seriousness of our intention to vindicate our right we may have lost the benefit of their tardy repentance, and put the weapon of *defence* from our own hands into theirs.

. . . . . .

## TO JOHN ADAMS

ST. PETERSBURG, 13 July, 1812.

. . . . . .

The issue of the election of governor in Massachusetts has been already some time known to us. Entertaining a favorable opinion of the moderation and discretion of Mr. Strong, I augur no very great evil from his recovery by so scanty a majority of the place which he lost by a majority nearly as weak. That the English faction have been compelled to take him for their champion is proof enough that they are still wide of their mark. He was heretofore shy of them and their politics. If he calculates upon a long second career as commander in chief of Massachusetts, he will beware of them and their measures again. If Henry's correspondence gave him votes this year, I doubt whether it will produce the same effect the next. That party as long as they can keep up the struggle for the dominion of New England or their hopeful eastern empire are doomed to roll the stone of Sisyphus; it will recoil upon them every time they succeed in rolling it up to the top of the hill.

Truckle to England and go to war with France, so said in his last days Fisher Ames. So snarled from the first embargo time down to the argument for Captain Bingham, Timothy Pickering. So chattered from the affair of the *Chesapeake* downwards, the Yankee Farmer and Boston Rebel, the

*Gentleman* who writes analyses and comments upon suppressed documents, the *Gentleman* [1] who began by maintaining against me in a public insurance office of Boston, that Berkeley's attack upon the *Chesapeake* to search for and take deserters was *perfectly justifiable*. So openly and boldly said Mr. Gore to the patriotic Massachusetts legislature of 1809, and for so saying was made governor of the Commonwealth at the next election. So have said, still say, and must say in so many words, or in full substance to the same effect, not only every man who hankers after the separation of the states, hatched between Boston, Connecticut and Washington in 1804, but every man who pretends to have a system concerning our foreign affairs in opposition to that of our government. How Mr. Strong has extricated himself from the difficulty of talking to the legislature on this subject I know not. I hope not as Mr. Griswold talked to the legislature of Connecticut. I think Mr. Gore's open dealing infinitely preferable to that.

But this doctrine of truckling to England for the sake of going to war with France never will, never can, obtain an ascendency over the people of the United States, and it will forever end by tripping up the heels of those who build it upon the narrow scale of a New England or Massachusetts system. By pinning themselves upon Old England they will not only always have to share more or less the odium of her outrages upon our country, but the danger of her treachery and perfidy to themselves, the depression of her disasters in her wars with all the rest of the world, and the contempt at the notorious profligacy and the stupid blunders of her rulers.

I have the most respectful deference for *your* opinions upon the importance of naval armament and an inclination,

[1] John Lowell.

perhaps more powerful than my own judgment, to concur with them all. But I have read with very little edification the speeches of Mr. Quincy and Mr. Lloyd on the subject. Both these gentlemen are abundantly eloquent, and their discourses appear to me to contain a great deal of everything but *persuasion.* Mr. Quincy threatens separation again, peaceably if we can, forcibly if we must—"a navy, or separation." And pray if you separate, my good sir, will not such men as General Varnum, and Mr. Cutts, and Mr. Seaver, have as bad an opinion of a navy afterwards as they have now, and will they not quite as probably form the majority in your fragment of an empire as they form part of it now in the whole one? Will Connecticut now, and the Genesee, and the White and Green mountains, make their home upon the mountain wave, any more than Ohio, or Kentucky, or Tennessee? Separate, and in addition to all your external and internal enemies look out for border wars; but do not talk of separating for a navy while New England votes turn the question against the navy on the floor of the present Congress. You are afraid the Europeans will call us *pigmy statesmen;* but while we can show them such great statesmen as you, we may laugh at their derision and return them scorn for scorn. Your excess of stature shall make up for our deficiency, and restore all to a level according to the modern moral doctrine of compensations. You call for a navy to protect our commerce, and show us calculation upon calculation of exports, tonnage, freight percentage and what not; but in conclusion you admit that an *attempt* to protect all this against Great Britain would be ludicrously wild and [*blank*], and that all you ask is a force to protect your coasts, harbors and coasting trade, which impartially speaking she has but little injured, and which you have not proved that your half a dozen 74's and your ten or twenty

frigates would not supply with both temptation and apology for attacking.

Mr. Lloyd does not threaten a dissolution of the Union, though he should not get his twenty frigates; but to conciliate the *good will* of his hearers he takes of their measures a review compounded of ignorance, prejudice and party spirit with five parts error to one of truth, and brands them all as a series of *dishonorable* actions. He too is a stupendous calculator, and to prove that commerce has been utterly abandoned and ruined by our government, quotes official returns stating our exports of vegetable food in 1791 to have been about four millions and a half, and in 1811 upwards of twenty millions of dollars. I suspect that Edmund Burke taught these gentlemen their custom house and counting-house oratory. But Burke's arithmetic was in unison with his logic. Quincy casts up one account and argues to another, and Lloyd's returns give the lie direct to his argument.

Verily such colossal dialectics, such Patagonian ratiocination as these speeches unfold, are not suited to the diminutive faculties of us "little sons of little men," of us pigmy statesmen, at whose puny dimensions the future cynic is to swear with such piercing truth.

The question of a navy is a *great one*, and in my humble opinion embraces considerations far more important and extensive than any that Mr. Quincy or Mr. Lloyd have seen fit to contemplate in their discussion of it. Far be it from me to depreciate the millions of dollars to which freight and tonnage, and exported fish, flour, or manufactures, may amount. But in this question something besides dollars and cents is concerned. I have no room to say more, and I entreat your indulgence for having said so much. I am etc.

## TO THOMAS BOYLSTON ADAMS

ST. PETERSBURG, 14 July, 1812.

. . . . . .

By what singular and unaccountable accident the letters taken from Captain Hinckley last year at Hamburg ever found their way to you, is matter of much more surprise to me than the seizure of them by the police at the time. It must certainly be that *generosity*, which your father gives the world credit for, which induced the honorable seal breakers to forward the letters after reading them, and there is a candor and bonhommie in the inclosure of their own abstract and translation which I like much better than my Lord Castlereagh's report from the Right Honorable the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty, that "no letters, public or private were broken open."

When I first learnt that my number 11 to you had fallen into the hands of the French police, and that in all probability it has been transmitted to Paris, I very well knew that the paragraph of which the translation is now in your hands would excite attention, and have a degree of interest there stronger than you could imagine. It referred to transactions and to the exertion of an influence with which they were well acquainted, and which had given me more trouble and concern than anything else that has happened during my residence here. When they got the letter the struggle was over, and their objects had been completely defeated. I have no doubt they understood every word of the extract better than you to whom the letter was directed, because they had reports from other sources relative to the same subject, which you have had no opportunity of perusing. His Majesty the Emperor Napoleon occupies himself much

more with details of commerce than you seem to be aware of, and if he does not exactly reason from his information, as you and I might do, it is because certain motives enter into the composition of his deliberations which *we* should not so readily admit.

Mr. John Henry's correspondence is one of the most instructive political pamphlets that has fallen under my cognizance for several years. Among many other interesting revelations it discloses, or at least asserts, that the pleasures and the indolence of certain ministers abandon to subalterns the administration of public affairs. One of the great misfortunes of all the old governments of Europe, and it has not a little contributed to their greatest calamities of late years, has been precisely this, that their great men, their ministers and generals, have been and are men of pleasure and of indolence, and of course that their business has of necessity been abandoned to subalterns. Ignorance of what they ought to know has been no inconsiderable source of the blunders which have been punished by such heavy calamities to themselves. Whatever may be the vices of France under her new system this is not among them. She at least is not governed by subalterns. The activity of all her official administrations might teach her enemies a lesson of wisdom, if luxury, sensuality, and indolence, could learn wisdom from either friend or foe. But when indolence contends with toil, when pleasure wrestles with diligence, which party think you will bear away the prize? I certainly do not approve the manner in which his Majesty's police obtained possession of my letter, but the extract and translation sufficiently show that it was not obtained without a purpose, and I incline to the belief that its final inclosure to you was intended as a hint that its contents had not been perused without suitable notice.

The city of St. Petersburg has no longer the honor of being the scene of negotiations, either political or commercial. The Emperor and his Minister of Foreign Affairs have both been nearly three months absent from it, and now, in the political convulsion which is shaking Europe to its deepest foundations, Russia has once more changed her side and entered upon the bloody "arena." The war has been commenced more than three weeks. Of its events hitherto our information here is not very distinct, nor perhaps very accurate. The Russians have been retreating to unite their forces, but nothing decisive of the issue of the campaign has to our knowledge hitherto occurred.

This explosion has tended very much to aggravate my apprehensions that another of a similar nature may before this have burst upon our country. A last hope still lingers upon my mind; that the recent abandonment of the British Orders in Council, forced as it has been by the desperation of hunger from the very grasp of their authors and supporters, and insidious as the appearance of their conduct is in their manner of yielding to the storm they have raised, may still lead to arrangements which shall save us from the extremity of war. The debate in the British House of Commons on the 16th of June, upon Mr. Brougham's motion, was of such import to us, to our government, and to the supporters of its policy among ourselves, that I hope it will be duly known and in all its particulars in America. The evidence appears to have been all printed. I have not seen it, but I hope that too will be transmitted across the Atlantic. Not only the speeches of Mr. Brougham and Mr. Baring, but those of Mr. Rose and Lord Castlereagh, are memorable documents to us. "War in Disguise" dared not show his face.[1] And Marryat, the kinsman *of our writers*,

[1] James Stephen.

the man who in a pamphlet had urged the policy of forcing the American government to terms by distressing the American people into riot against their rulers, this man was reduced to the necessity of complaining in open Parliament that he, his wife and children were in danger of being torn to pieces by the frenzy of the starving manufacturers.

God grant that we may yet be spared from the trials and dangers of this war. Or, if we must pass through them, that the spirit which conducted us through that of our revolution may again lead us in triumph through all its evils—a sentiment as profound and irradicable in my heart as that of the affection with which I am ever yours.

## TO THE SECRETARY OF STATE

No. 92. [JAMES MONROE]

ST. PETERSBURG, 25 July, 1812.

SIR:

The French ambassador and the consul, with their families, the Württemberg and Westphalian ministers, the Bavarian and Neapolitan chargés d'affaires, embarked at Oranienbaum (opposite to Cronstadt) and sailed on the 23rd instant to be landed at Memel. A frigate, a corvette, and two transports, were provided by the Russian government for their conveyance, it having been thought not advisable to permit their departure by land. The Bavarian minister had left this city some weeks before the commencement of hostilities, and was at a country seat in the neighborhood of Riga. In answer to his application for passports he received permission to go, by water, from one of two ports named to him in the vicinity, and was informed by a letter

from Count Romanzoff that the Russian frontier from the Baltic to the Black Sea being invaded, the French embassy and the legations from the Rhenish confederation would be under the necessity of departing by sea. As Count Lauriston is a military officer, and intends proceeding immediately to the Emperor Napoleon's headquarters, it was perhaps thought best not to afford him the means of observation which a journey passing directly through the Russian line of defence might yield. Upon what principle the extension of the same cautious arrangement was governed is merely matter of conjecture. But the Austrian and Spanish ministers, the Saxon and Prussian chargés d'affaires, and a Prussian military agent who has resided here some years, all of whom applied also for their passports at the same time with the French ambassador, were exempted from its operations. They were permitted, notwithstanding the invasion of the frontier, to go by land. The Spanish minister's infirm state of health, and circumstances of private concernment to the Saxon, were alleged as motives of indulgence to them; but the favor shewn to the Austrians and Prussians was more probably dictated by motives of policy, with views still to conciliate their governments, or at least to excite jealousies between them and their allies. It appears that Count Stackelberg, the Russian minister at Vienna, has obtained permission to remain there in a private character, and Count St. Julien, the Austrian minister here, has been given to understand that the same privilege would be allowed him, if he should think proper to remain. It is not certain that his orders from his court to depart were peremptory. He still lingers here, though I believe some manifestation of impatience at his delay by the late ambassador had induced him to fix for his own departure the same day on which the ambassador himself was to embark. The Prussians

had asked the permission of their government to remain here, but had not obtained it. They are, however, not yet gone.

A chargé d'affaires from Sweden arrived here on the same day that the ambassador and his colleagues left the city. He is a young man, named Hochschild, and was formerly here as one of the secretaries of Count Stedingk. He comes directly from Örebro, where the Diet is still in session. The negotiation of the peace with England is conducted in concert between Sweden and Russia. The English negotiator is Mr. Thornton, the Russian, General Van Suchtelen. But the French chargé d'affaires, Mr. de Cabre, is yet at Stockholm, and in the course of the negotiation both Britain and Russian have perhaps discovered great distrust of Sweden. Mr. Thornton was gone to Gothenburg when Mr. Hochschild left Orebro.

A Mr. Lea has been to the headquarters of the Emperor Alexander, and has there been received and recognized as the official representative of the Spanish government at Cadiz; though without formal diplomatic character. He has generally resided here the last eighteen months, as a partner of a commercial house, at the head of which was the late Mr. Anthony Colombi, heretofore the Spanish Consul. The Spanish minister who has just gone, had by a singular fortune arrived here with credentials from King Ferdinand, from the Junta then at Seville, and from King Joseph.

The last only had been presented by him and received. He was recognized as the minister of King Joseph. An informal intercourse has, however, constantly been maintained with the government at Cadiz. . . . .

## TO BENJAMIN WATERHOUSE

ST. PETERSBURG, 31 July, 1812.

DEAR SIR:

Your favor of 18 March, together with the inclosed paper containing Mr. John Henry's correspondence on his memorable mission to Boston, I received not many days since. I have observed by the newspapers of a later date that the party with whom he was sent to negotiate disavow all connection with him, and deny all participation in his transactions on that occasion. Thus far their conduct is laudable, and by the law of our land every man must be presumed innocent who pleads not guilty, until proof of his guilt is produced. But the party to whom he was accredited have certainly countenanced the project upon which he was sent. From the complexion of their newspaper publication they even yet dare to countenance it. That as long as they have the impudence to threaten a *separation of the States*, and even as long as they shall sneakingly hanker after it without daring to avow it, their plans will all terminate in their utter discomfiture and confusion, I am thoroughly convinced. That was the purport of Henry's errand, and to that their measures were driving with Jehu-like fury when he was sent among them. Erskine's arrangement broke them up into fragments "utterly harmless and contemptible," as Mr. Canning says; and when that momentary gleam of good sense on the part of Great Britain, by removing the real cause of all the distresses of our commerce left our people calmly to estimate the measures of our government and the opposition projects of those gentlemen, they very soon found what the people thought of both. The British ministry, however, less wise than their envoy in America,

chose to renew the experience of injustice, insolence, and oppression, refused to sanction his engagements, recalled him, and put in his stead a man to bully and insult us. From the feasting, and banqueting, and toasting, which this man received at Boston, he seems to have been a character to the heart's content of our wise men of the east. They seconded all his insults, and passed resolutions in honor and support of him as patriotic as those they had passed while Henry was with them. But the people did not go with them.

Now after another trial of two years more by the British government how far the temper of the American government and nation would endure injury and outrage rather than resort to the last and only remedy of war, the same men who so loftily spurned at Erskine's accommodation have been forced, with the most extreme reluctance compelled by famine and revolt among the victims of their foolish policy in their own country, to tread back every step they had taken, to adjust the affair of the *Chesapeake* exactly as Erskine had done, even with the very severe but just rebuke upon their hypocrisy and falsehood, for pretending they had punished Berkeley, while they refused to punish him at all, that very rebuke at which their pride had affected to be so much wounded; to repeal not only the Orders in Council to which they had so long and so obstinately clung, but that very paper blockade of May, 1806, which laid the foundation of the French "continental system," and of all the subsequent anti-neutral decrees and orders both of France and England; to do more than they were asked to do when Erskine made his settlement, and to proclaim by their manner of doing it to all mankind, that they had been forced to it by the firm and temperate resistance of the American government.

I please myself with the hope that these great and real

concessions extorted from the stubbornness of the British councils, though at the last extremity, will preserve us from that greatest of scourges war. Though until the Orders in Council were removed I thought that war inevitable, I cannot think it so now, as the great objects for which we have been struggling are substantially yielded.

What the cool and deliberate judgment of the people in America upon this event will be, I cannot undertake to foretell. I suppose, however, it will be discoverable in the elections that are near at hand. I do not imagine that it will be very propitious to the projectors of a separation of the States.

I was much gratified in learning that the legislature of Massachusetts had restored to the University their old Board of Overseers. It has exceedingly grieved me to see the spirit of party creeping like a poisonous weed into our venerable seminary of education. Believing the change of the overseers to have been altogether a party measure, I lamented it sincerely. I cannot say that I should be pleased to see nine republicans added to the corporation for the very same reason, because it would be an innovation dictated by party spirit. I wish there were less politics, and especially less violent and erroneous politics, than I know there are in the corporation. But let the overseers do their duty, and bad politics in the corporation will never do much harm. I would say to all who feel interested in the welfare of the college, beware above all things of innovation in the heat of political dissension.

. . . . . .

I remain etc.

## TO THE SECRETARY OF STATE

No. 93. [JAMES MONROE]

ST. PETERSBURG, 1 August, 1812.

SIR:

The above is the latest official account from the armies that has yet been published. The first handbill observed that it was expedient to avoid a general action, until the army under Prince Bagration should have formed its junction with that commanded by the Minister of War, General Barclai de Tolli. It does not appear that this junction has been effected. In one of the official publications it was said that Prince Bagration had received orders *to attack*. An unauthentic rumor has been in circulation that he did attack, but without success, and that after the action he retired upon the Dnieper; that the French army after cutting off his passage have successively occupied Minsk, Borisow, Orsha, and Smolensk on the direct road to Moscow, and that if the junction between the two Russian armies should now be formed, it must be in the rear of the French forces.

On the 6/18 July the Emperor Alexander issued from the headquarters at or near Polotsk, a proclamation to the Russian nation, expressing his entire confidence in the valor and strength of his forces already assembled for the defence of the Empire; but stating at the same time, that their enemy, hoping by force and treachery to attain his object, had invaded the country with very considerable forces, and that it was necessary to make seasonable preparations even for the worst contingencies. A distinct appeal was therefore made to all the several classes of the people, to the nobility,

the clergy and the citizens, to come forward according to the duties of their respective stations in defence of the liberty, the religion, and the independence of the nation. The nobility were specially called upon to meet in the several governments, and to provide an additional temporary military force, in the nature of a militia, the officers of which should be elected by themselves, and a commander in chief, to be elected in like manner, by a deputation from the several governments, to meet at Moscow.

The day after this proclamation was issued the Emperor left the headquarters of the First Army, and proceeded to Moscow, to direct the necessary arrangements for the organization of this new force. At the same time Prince George of Holstein-Oldenburg, husband of the Grand Duchess Catherine, son of the Duke of Oldenburg, whose Duchy was annexed with the Hanseatic cities to France, and governor general of the three governments of Novgorod, Tver, and Yaroslaff, also left for a short time the army, and went to Novgorod and Tver to assemble the nobility of those governments for the purpose of taking measures in conformity to the imperial proclamation. On his arrival at Novgorod, where he met the Grand Duchess arriving from St. Petersburg, he addressed a summons to the nobility of the government, who held a meeting and agreed to furnish a body of ten thousand men, to be maintained at their own expense during the war. Similar meetings have been held at Moscow and in this city, where the same spirit of exertion and of devotion to the public has been manifested The nobility of the government of St. Petersburg met three days successively in the course of this week, and agreed to furnish from their estates four men upon every hundred. Among the inhabitants of the city, five thousand volunteers have presented themselves to be enrolled. General Kutuzoff, now

here, was elected as the commander in chief for the organization of this levy, which is to be ready at the disposal of the government by the 1st of November.

A Te Deum was celebrated last Sunday for the conclusion of the peace with Turkey, of which the ratifications have at length been exchanged. The treaty itself has not yet been published, but it is said the *Pruth* is to be the boundary. The Ottoman Porte does not appear to have paid much regard to the guarantee of their territory in the alliance between France and Austria.

A circumstance not a little extraordinary is, that the conclusion of peace with England, if accomplished, has not yet been made public. An Admiral Bentinck was at the Emperor Alexander's headquarters, dispatched, it is said, by Admiral Saumarez from the British Fleet in the Baltic, to which he has again returned. All the prohibitions against the admission of English vessels, and of vessels from England still subsist in form, and no vessels have yet entered at Cronstadt [illegible] from an English port, or cleared from Cronstadt to an English port. At Archangel, I am informed [illegible] vessels entering from English ports [illegible]

[illegible] has been expected here all this [illegible] general [illegible] however [illegible]

[illegible] this [illegible] have been [illegible] Sweden, and [illegible]

embark in it with the Russians, and that its destination is for Swedish Pomerania. I am with great respect,

## TO GEORGE JOY

St. Petersburg, 4 August, 1812.

Sir:

Mr. Richardson brought me on his arrival here a packet containing two pamphlets, with a minute from you promising a duplicate and letter by Mr. Willing.

That gentleman had already been some time here, but I was disappointed in the hope which the minute had excited. I found upon inquiry that he had neither pamphlet nor letter for me. Since then, however, and within a few days, the duplicate of the "American Question," the manuscript copy of the letter to the Noble Lord, and *half* the letter which was to have been sent by Mr. Willing have come to hand. For the other half of the letter I still live in hope, and in the meantime will no longer postpone my thanks for what I have received.

I have read the pamphlets with the attention which the subject and the manner of discussing it were calculated to excite, and observing the main object of their argument and the meridian for which they were intended, I consider their reasoning as quite unanswerable, and it is presented in lights suitable to carry conviction where it was to be produced. There is a passage in page 64 of the letters to a clergyman which I have understood as alluding to a publication of mine written at a very early period of these controversies; but this being mere conjecture and the allusion being in general terms I may have mistaken its object. I certainly did believe and publish my belief that "young Mr. Rose's

mission" was intended not to succeed. I gave much at large my reasons for that opinion, nor have I seen cause since to apprehend that I had entertained it unjustly. I did not know, however, until now that either the king or the Prince Regent had felt or manifested *personally* so strong and clear an inclination that reparation should be made for the outrage upon the *Chesapeake*, and indeed the 5th letter to the clergyman leaves some doubt upon my mind whether its meaning in this respect is explicit or ironical. There is, however, a concession in it which in candor, and merely as it regards the impression upon your own mind, I ask you to *reconsider*. It says "as it was, I am no advocate for any expression of dissatisfaction on the part of that government in accepting the proffered atonement," etc. Remember, that in the very instrument offering this atonement the British government *falsely pretended* that it included the punishment of the offending officer, while in reality they inflexibly refused to punish him at all. By accepting an atonement, relinquishing that most important part of the satisfaction which America had so just a right to demand, was it not incumbent upon the President to show that he did not recognize the *pretence* of *Berkeley's* punishment to have been really such; and would it not have been really more honorable to the king of England to have punished the offender in fact, than to have pretended he had punished him, when he really had not, but had peremptorily refused to punish him? Had *no expression of dissatisfaction* been used in accepting the atonement, any future appeal to the documents would have shown that America had actually taken for substantial punishment a mockery of words notoriously false. Who shall engage to say that it would not have been produced as a precedent to refuse future malefactors of the same class from all punishment? The exclusion of this

conclusion was in my view so essential in that transaction that I do most heartily approve that expression of dissatisfaction which Mr. Smith inserted by Mr. Madison's express command, and which in his pamphlet he says he himself disapproved. After all the bluster of Mr. Canning about this expression of dissatisfaction the British government have finally agreed to make the very same atonement, accepted with an expression still stronger of the very same dissatisfaction. This even in the *Times* newspaper is spoken of as a *smart and just observation* upon the inconsistency of the pretension that Berkeley had been punished. I regret the more that the clergyman's correspondent yields this point, because it has been made so personal to Mr. Madison, because it has been so often misstated and misunderstood both in Europe and America, and because its justification never has been placed upon its true grounds, or indeed so far as I have seen publicly attempted at all.

Since the publication of these two pamphlets what a change in the relations between the United States and Great Britain! How many questions to settle besides anti-neutral Orders in Council, and non-importation, or impressment of seamen, and exclusion of ships of war. Even yet, however, I would not despair that peace may be restored, if not preserved. Mr. Foster's letter of 30 May to Mr. Monroe would have left the case perfectly hopeless, had not the Regent's proclamation of 22 June given a new commentary upon it and upon the whole system of the Orders in Council, the beneficial effect of which will, I hope, not yet be lost. When England has yielded the substance, I am willing to hope she will persist in the purpose of obtaining the object for which it was conceded. Upon herself alone I am persuaded it depends. I am etc.

## TO ABIGAIL ADAMS

St. Petersburg, 10 August, 1812.

. . . . . .

I then flattered myself that the revocation of the British Orders in Council, of which I had just been informed, would be known in the United States in season to prevent the war which I knew would otherwise be unavoidable. In this hope I have been disappointed. After reading Mr. Foster's letter to Mr. Monroe of 30 May I cannot indeed perceive any other course which was left to the American government without self degradation to pursue than that which they did adopt: but when I remark that within fifteen days after that letter of Mr. Foster was written, the very same British ministers by whose instructions he sent it had determined finally to repeal the whole system which was kindling the war, which they had always pretended was necessary to the national existence of England, and which they now ordered Mr. Foster to say was more necessary than ever, I see no room left for calculation beforehand upon anything. I lament the declaration of war as an event which in the actual state of things when it passed was altogether unnecessary, the greatest and only inexcusable cause for it having been removed: but as it was not and could not be known to Congress I cannot be surprised that they should have considered all pacific and conciliatory means of obtaining justice as exhausted, and no alternative left but war or the abandonment of our right as an independent nation.

The declaration, however, essentially alters the aspect of affairs between the two countries and their governments that I now consider everything again thrown upon the chances of events. That the British ministers are now de-

sirous of peace with us is obvious from the steps they have taken. How far the policy of our government will be affected by the revocation of the Orders in Council when they learn that it preceded the declaration of war, I can hardly foresee. My own most fervent wishes and prayers are that peace may be restored before any further irritating and aggravating hostilities shall have been committed on either side.

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## TO THE SECRETARY OF STATE

No. 95. [JAMES MONROE]

ST. PETERSBURG, 30 September, 1812.

SIR:

I have the honor to enclose copies of a note which I received from the Chancellor, Count Romanzoff, communicating two printed copies of the treaty of peace late concluded with the Ottoman Porte, and of my answer. One of the copies of the treaty is likewise enclosed.

On the 20th instant *I received a note from the Chancellor requesting me to call upon him the next evening which I accordingly did. He told me that he had asked to see me by the Emperor's command; that having made peace and established the relations of amity and commerce with Great Britain, the Emperor was much concerned and disappointed to find the whole benefit which he expected his subjects would derive commercially from that event defeated and lost by the new war which had arisen between the United States and England; that he had thought he perceived various indications that there was on both sides a reluctance at engaging in and prosecuting this war, and it had occurred to the Emperor that perhaps an amicable*

*arrangement of the differences between the parties might be accommodated more easily and speedily by indirect than by a direct negotiation; that his Majesty had directed him to see me and to enquire if I was aware of any difficulty or obstacle on the part of the government of the United States, if he should offer his mediation for the purpose of effecting a pacification. I answered that it was obviously impossible for me to speak on this subject any otherwise than from the general knowledge which I had of the sentiments of my government; that I was so far from knowing what their ideas were with regard to the continuance of the war, that I had not to that day received any official communication of its declaration, but that I well knew it was with reluctance they had engaged in the war; that I was very sure whatever determination they might form upon the proposal of the Emperor's mediation, they would receive and consider it as a new evidence of his Majesty's regard and friendship for the United States, and that I was not aware of any obstacle or difficulty which could occasion them to decline accepting it. For myself I deeply lamented the very existence of the war; that I should welcome any facility for bringing it to a just and honorable termination. I lamented it, because I thought that the only cause which had made it absolutely unavoidable was actually removed at the moment when the declaration was made. If the course which had been adopted by my government had been such as I could not in my own mind approve, it would still not become me to censure it, but it was not so. The declaration of the English Regent in April, and the letter Mr. Foster had written to the American Secretary of State in communicating it, had as it appeared to me left the American government no alternative but an immediate appeal to arms, or a dishonorable abandonment of all the unquestionable rights for which they had contended, and even the essential characteristics of an independent nation. The blame of the war*

*was therefore entirely on the English side, but the war was not the less disagreeable to me. I lamented it particularly as occurring at a period when, from my good wishes for Russia and the Russian cause, I should have rejoiced to see friendship and harmony taking place between America and England, rather than discord and hostility. I knew the war would affect unfavorably the interests of Russia. I knew it must be highly injurious both to the United States and England. I could see no good result as likely to arise from it to anyone. The Count replied that he had considered it altogether in the same light, and so had the Emperor who was sincerely concerned at it, and who had himself conceived this idea of authorizing his mediation. He thought one indirect negotiation conducted here, aided by the conciliatory wishes of a friend to both parties, might smooth down difficulties which in direct discussion between the principals might be found insuperable. To a mutual friend each party might exhibit all its claims and all its complaints, without danger of exciting irritations or raising impediments. The part of Russia would only be to hear both sides, and to use her best endeavors to conciliate them. I observed that there was a third party to be consulted as to the proposal—the British government. The Count answered that it had already been suggested by him to the British ambassador, Lord Cathcart, who had the day before dispatched it by a messenger to his court. Some question occurred concerning the mode of enabling me to transmit this communication to the United States, upon which the Count promised to see me again in the course of a few days. He said that he should write to Mr. Daschkoff and instruct him to make the proposition to the government of the United States.*[1]

I am with great respect, etc.

[1] Cypher.

## TO THE SECRETARY OF STATE

No. 96. [James Monroe]

St. Petersburg, 2 October, 1812.

Sir:

. . . . . .

It has, indeed, constantly been my wish not to be continued in the mission here beyond the ensuing Spring, and I suggested this desire to the President as early as last February. I still retain it, subject to the supposition that my return to the United States with my family should be practicable, which in the event of the continuance of our war with Great Britain it would scarcely be. If the proposition communicated to you in my last letter should be deemed by the President acceptable, he may perhaps think it advisable to commit the negotiation to some other person, which I do not feel the inclination or the duty to ask, but in which I should very readily acquiesce. But whether he should judge it expedient to commit the trust to me, or to another, it may probably occasion the dispatching of a vessel, protected from capture, by which a remittance in specie might be made to me, which would save me from the almost incredible loss in exchange, which by drawing upon Amsterdam I must incur. And if it be his pleasure to recall me, the same vessel might perhaps furnish me a safe conduct [illegible]

[illegible]

*of the empire. Although no suggestion of such a design has been officially made, it is generally understood by the public to be contemplated upon certain contingencies, and it is supposed that upon such an event it would be expected, and perhaps required, of the foreign ministers to accompany or to follow the sovereign. The city may fall into the possession of a hostile army as has already happened to Moscow, in which case the character of a public minister might be no farther recognized than as securing the right to retire without molestation. The danger if any such now exists will I trust be entirely removed before the Spring; but as it may be otherwise I request the President's eventual instructions for the government of my conduct in the cases supposed. My present intentions are, if invited, to attend the Emperor, to comply as my duty resulting from my credentials; if requested to remain (which is possible), likewise to comply, trusting to the general protection secured to my character and family by the law of nations. If left at my option to stay, to follow the Emperor, or to move where I may judge proper, I shall still remain, unless circumstances should occur to make it necessary for the safety of my family to withdraw.*[1]

I am with great respect, etc.

## TO JOHN ADAMS

ST. PETERSBURG, 4 October, 1812.

MY DEAR SIR:

. . . . . .

But of the war in the country where I reside you may expect me to speak more at large, and, besides the general interest to which it is entitled as forming so large a portion

[1] Cypher.

of the history of the civilized world, our residence here may give you a particular concern with it, as our own situation and circumstances are in no small degree involved in its events. On the 24th of June the war began, and from that day to this, according to the official bulletins published here, has consisted of an uninterrupted series of Russian victories. We have had Te Deums, illuminations, cannon firing, bell ringing and all the external demonstrations of continual triumph, while the French armies have been advancing with rapid and steady pace, until on the 15th of September, the very day that my poor child died, they took possession of Moscow, the ancient and renowned metropolis of the Russian empire. The real progress of military operations has been known very tardily, and only by the dates from time to time of the official reports from headquarters. It is not prudent to have the knowledge of disasters when they have happened, still less to anticipate those which may come. The private correspondence from the armies must tally with, or at least not materially vary from, the official reports of the Commanders in Chief. *Discretion* is one of the most universal virtues in governments organized like this, as the want of it is one of those the most surely and most severely punished. The concealment and disguise practised to keep the knowledge from the public of facts which it would be disagreeable to them to know, give rise, however, to many [illegible] still more un-[illegible] so that be-[illegible] on one side and fictions [illegible] is perhaps better [illegible] than here, as it [illegible].

[illegible] the opportunity of wit-[illegible] upon the public mind by

the course of the war which could not be so well observed at a distance. The hopes of the Russians that the issue will be glorious and successful to them are founded, first on their army, and secondly on the natural advantages of their situation. To judge of the operations of their generals from their measures would seem that their whole instructions are on no consideration, and in no event whatsoever, to risk any essential disaster to the army; to abandon everything else rather than stake the army upon the chances of a battle. This system is cautious, and perhaps the best that could have been adopted; but it gives an appearance of timidity to all their warlike operations singularly contrasting with the boldness and impetuosity of the invader, and which he has not failed to turn to his own advantage. Twice on the passage from the river Niemen to Moscow the Russians appear to have determined to meet their enemy in battle, and on both occasions they assert that the field of battle was theirs. But the fear of hazarding the safety of the army has not only prevented them from profiting by their success, but has induced them to yield to their vanquished antagonist all the fruits of victory. For the battle of Borodino, St. Petersburg was illuminated and a Te Deum was performed. The Russian general who commanded at it was made a Field Marshal, and received a gratuity of a hundred thousand rubles; and eight days afterwards Napoleon entered Moscow, and the Field Marshal, with excuse and apology, reported to his master that, notwithstanding his victory, he had surrendered the capital to preserve the army.

But Napoleon is in an enemy's country, hemmed in between four Russian armies over whose bodies he must either advance or retreat; two thousand miles distant from his own capital; having lost one half the forces with which he commenced the war; and surrounded in the midst of his

camp by auxiliary armies so disaffected to him and his cause, that at the first symptom of defeat they would more eagerly turn their arms against him than they now follow his banners. Notwithstanding his rapid and hitherto triumphant career the hope of finally expelling and even of annihilating him and his whole host here grows sanguine in proportion as he proceeds. It is far stronger and more confident than it was at the commencement of the war, and the Emperor Alexander who then pledged himself to his people that he would never make peace while one armed enemy should have his foot on the Russian territory, has since the loss of Moscow publicly said that none but a scoundrel can at the present juncture pronounce the name of peace.

. . . . . .

## TO THE SECRETARY OF STATE

No. 97. [JAMES MONROE]

ST. PETERSBURG, 12 October, 1812.

SIR:

I have received from Count Soltikoff, the member of the Imperial Council charged with the Department of Foreign Affairs, two printed copies of the treaty of peace between Russia and Great Britain, signed at Stockholm the 18th of July last, with a circular note from the Count, of which, and of my answer, together with one of the printed treaties, I herewith inclose copies. It was, as you may have observed, the Chancellor Count Romanzoff who recently communicated in a similar manner the peace with Turkey. It seems that since the Chancellor's return he occasionally resumes the exercise of his functions in the Foreign Department,

but that Count Soltikoff continues to transact the business of it likewise.

I continue to send you translations of the official bulletins published here exhibiting the progress of the war, and the military operations of the armies. It is now so extremely seldom that I can enjoy *any* opportunity of transmitting dispatches to you, that I fear none of these publications will reach you until the news they contain will have been so long known to you, or have become by the operation of subsequent events so totally uninteresting, that the mere perusal of them will be an insupportable burden upon your time. Yet I have thought it might be deemed useful to possess the series of these official documents, and particularly of those which describe the most important events of the war, as they contain the representation of occurrences as viewed and authenticated by the Russian government. In war, it seldom perhaps never happens that the official narratives of great events, or of military operations in general, on either side contain the whole truth. It is rare among the European nations that they do not contain much untruth; nor will you think it extraordinary that after perusing the whole series of these publications you should find an uninterrupted succession of Russian victories, without a single defeat, result in the entrance of the French army at Moscow within three months after they had stepped over a frontier eight hundred miles distant from it. As the principle of the war on the part of Russia has been strictly defensive, the system has been to avoid any general action which might risk too large a part of the army. It is the general opinion that both Smolensk and Moscow might have been saved, had the Russian generals chosen to stake them upon the issue of a battle; and so universally do all the private reports and letters from the army concur with

Prince Kutuzoff's reports to the Emperor, that the battle of Borodino was a great victory to the Russians, that the Prince himself does not escape censure not merely for having surrendered Moscow, without further resistance, but for having suffered the French army to escape. It is certain that from the Russian commander's first report, not only the public in general, but the Emperor Alexander himself, fully expected that pursuit and not retreat was to be the next operation of the victorious army. I enclosed to you with one of my late letters a bulletin extraordinary in the French language, two copies of which were sent to me from the Chancellor's office. It expressly states that General Platoff had been dispatched the day after the battle in pursuit of the fugitive French, *and had overtaken their rear guard.* When that bulletin was issued here, Napoleon was at Moscow.

It had been an opinion generally entertained by both parties here (I mean the peace and the war party) that if Moscow should be taken, the Emperor Alexander would be inclined to negotiate. Both parties assumed it as unquestionable (though I think without sufficient evidence), that the French Emperor is anxiously desirous to negotiate. They consider his situation as precarious and perilous in the extreme. They suppose him to have the same idea of it himself, and they believe that his great object now is to [illegible] himself from it. The argument inferred from this [illegible] that now is the time to take advantage of these embarrassments, and to withdraw from a [illegible] may be hazarded by perseverance [illegible] will infallibly accomplish [illegible] army, and that the [illegible] times for negotiation. [illegible] these opinions, and

has expressed himself in the most decisive terms against every idea of peace since the loss of Moscow. The official proclamations, of which I have enclosed translations hold the same language.

The Emperor Alexander had a personal interview with the Prince Royal of Sweden at Åbo on the 27th of August; and immediately afterwards returned to this capital; where he arrived on the 2nd of September. Lord Cathcart, the British ambassador appointed to reside here, was at Åbo on his way hither at the same time, and arrangements for a triple alliance between Russia, Great Britain and Sweden, are said to have been agreed to there. A joint Russian and Swedish expedition has long been supposed to be contemplated against Swedish Pomerania, but at the interview between the Emperor and the Prince it was concluded that the Russians and the Swedes should act separately, though in concert. On his return, the Emperor gave orders at his passage through Helsingfors, for the immediate departure of the fleet and troops which had been so long waiting there. They sailed the same day. The troops to the number of 16,000 men a few days after landed at Reval, and marched to reënforce the garrison at Riga. The ships of war then returned to Cronstadt. A Swedish force of 25,000 men was immediately afterwards assembled at Landscrona, almost directly facing Copenhagen; and another of 15,000 men at Gothenburg. They were to sail in the last days of September, and their destination is understood to be a direct attack upon the Island of Zealand. In the meantime, no complaint has been alleged; no demand has been made by Sweden to Denmark. The justification of this procedure is understood to rest upon principles of state policy; and to explain the seemingly unaccountable course of Sweden during the last year. Great Britain, the *disinterested* ally

of Spain, is said to have had some scruples at this new sample of retaliation for French aggressions, but was at last brought to acquiesce and coöperate in it.

Immediately after the surrender of Moscow, the Emperor Alexander appointed Count Lieven as ambassador extraordinary to England; a Mr. Tatishtcheff, envoy extraordinary and minister plenipotentiary to the king of Spain, Ferdinand; and Baron Strogonoff, with the same character, to the king of Sweden; Prince Koslofsky, to the king of Sardinia; and Count Mocenigo, to the King of Sicily (Ferdinand). There had constantly been here a minister from Sardinia. Mr. Lea-Bermudez appears as plenipotentiary from Ferdinand VII of Spain, and in that capacity signed at Veliki Luki a treaty with the Chancellor Count Romanzoff, the contents of which have not, however, been made public. The Duke of Serra Capriola had been many years minister from the king of the two Sicilies, but since the peace of Tilsit his functions had been suspended. Having married a Russian lady, he had personally remained here with his family, and has now resumed and again been recognized in his official character. Count Lôwenhielm has just returned from Sweden, and has been received in the formal character of envoy extraordinary and minister plenipotentiary. The Portuguese minister, the Chevalier Bezarra, having received orders to repair to Rio Janeiro, left this place very lately. A Portuguese chargé d'affaires remains in his stead. I am with great respect, etc.

## TO THE SECRETARY OF STATE

No. 98. [JAMES MONROE]

ST. PETERSBURG, 17 October, 1812.

SIR:

I received a few days since a letter from Mr. Russell, dated at London, the 9th of September, and informing me that his mission there had closed; that he had received his passports, and that in three days from that time he should leave the city to embark at Plymouth for the United States. He adds that the British government had rejected a proposition which he had been authorized to make for a suspension of hostilities.

The evening before last I had another interview with the Chancellor Count Romanzoff at his request. There had been rumors in circulation here of an armistice in Canada, and of the appointment of commissioners by the President for a new negotiation with Great Britain. The Count asked me if I had any authentic information of these circumstances. I said I had not, that my information was altogether of a different aspect, and I told him the substance of Mr. Russell's communication. *He then observed that this incident would not discourage this government from making an offer of its mediation which he had suggested to me in a former conference; on the contrary, the failure of every new attempt at direct negotiation confirmed him in the belief and hope that a mediation might be more successful—a mediation of a common friend, not only desirous from the sentiment of friendship to see the parties reconciled to each other, but having also a strong interest of his own in their reconciliation.*

*The Count said he had his despatches for Mr. Daschkoff*

*ready, instructing him to make the proposition in form to the American government, and he asked me whether I could indicate to him a mode of transmitting them directly to the United States. In our former conversation (reported in No. 95) I had offered to dispatch one of the American vessels now at Cronstadt, if the British ambassador would furnish her a passport, or any document that would protect her from capture by British armed vessels. The Count said he had made the proposal to the ambassador, who had expressed his readiness to give the document,* provided *the vessel and messenger should go by the way of England—a condition which the Count said he had told the ambassador he could not ask me to agree to, and with which I did not think it in fact suitable to comply. There are, however, two American gentlemen here on the point of departure for the United States, and by them I shall transmit this dispatch and its duplicate, together with those of the Chancellor to Mr. Daschkoff.*[1] I am with great respect, etc.

## TO THE COMTE DE ROMANZOFF

St. Pétersbourg, 7/19 October, 1812.

Monsieur le Comte:

Le Sieur Robert Fulton, citoyen des États Unis, est l'inventeur d'une espèce de chaloupe ou navire pour naviguer sur les rivières, même contre les vents et les courans par le moyen du feu et de la vapeur. Associé au Sieur Robert R. Livingston, autre citoyen connu et distingué des États Unis, il a fait construire une de ces chaloupes qui depuis le mois de Juillet, 1807, navigue constamment sur la rivière de Hudson, entre les villes de New York et d'Albany, servant de diligence pour le transport de voyageurs. La dis-

[1] Cypher. See *Life and Correspondence of Rufus King*, V. 343.

tance entre ces deux villes est de 240 versts, dont le trajet se fait par ce moyen quelquefois en 24 heures, et toujours en moins de 40. L'expérience est tellement décisive en faveur de cette invention que d'après ce premier succes des le mois d'Avril dernier il existait sur les diverses rivières des États Unis quatorze de ces chaloupes, naviguées sur le principe de l'invention du Sieur Fulton, et construites sous le privilège exclusif accordé par la loi des États Unis aux associés Livingston et Fulton.

Les renseignements que le Sieur Fulton a réçu au sujet de la navigation sur quelques rivières de la Russie, et surtout de celle entre St. Pétersbourg et Cronstadt, lui ont fait croire que l'usage des chaloupes de son invention serait de la plus grande utilité, tant pour le transport des personnes que pour les commodités du commerce de cette capitale.

Comme la construction de ces navires exige des frais très considérables il s'est addressé à moi pour prendre des informations s'il lui serait possible d'obtenir du gouvernement de Sa Majesté l'Empereur un privilège exclusif pour la construction ou l'usage de ces chaloupes, soit sur toutes les rivières de la Russie, soit seulement entre les ports de St. Pétersbourg et de Cronstadt. Dans le premier cas il propose que la durée du privilège soit fixée à vingt ans, et dans le second à vingt-cinq ans, et que le privilège soit accordé sous condition que dans l'espace de trois ans à dater du jour qu'il en serait possesseur il aurait le premier de ces navires construit et en activité.

Il est persuadé que le trajet entre St. Pétersbourg et Cronstadt se ferait en quatre heures et demi sur une barque pour le transport des personnes, et en six heures pour une barque à merchandises du port de cinquante lasts; sauf les augmentations partielles de temps que pourrait occasioner un vent violent ou un courant rapide et contraire.

Sur cette proposition je me permettrai seulement de remarquer que l'utilité et l'importance de cette invention est universellement reconnu dans les États Unis où elle est depuis plus de cinq ans réduite en pratique. Qu'en tant que je puis être à même de juger je suis personellement persuadé que le même utilité en serait ressentie et d'une manière très avantageuse pour le commerce de St. Pétersbourg par son introduction dans ce pays. Le privilège exclusif de la construction et de l'usage des chaloupes et navires navigués par le moyen du feu et de la vapeur est le seul encouragement que le Sieur Fulton sollicite de la part du gouvernement et seulement pour un temps limité. Ce privilège necessaire pour assurer à l'inventeur le remboursement même des frais indispensables semble être une concession peu considérable au gouvernement même, puisque s'il ne l'accordait pas il est très sur vraisemblable que d'autres navigateurs par ce même moyen se présentassent dans l'espace des vingt ou vingt cinq ans que durerait le privilège. Il s'entend naturellement qu'avec ce privilège serait accordé le droit d'exiger pour le transport des merchandises ou des personnes sur ces chaloupes les mêmes prix que l'usage ou la loi permettent de recevoir pour le même service sur les navires et chaloupes ordinaires.

Votre Excellence m'a fait l'honneur de me donner à connaître que les privilège exclusifs de la nature de celui que désire le Sieur Fulton ne s'accordent en Russie que par des ordonnances exprès de Sa Majesté L'Empereur, c'est par cette considération que je prends la liberté de soumettre à Votre Excellence ces observations. Quant à l'avantage que produirait au commerce de cette ville le pouvoir pendant la saison navigable de transporter les merchandises d'importation ou d'exportation entre elle et Cronstadt sans être sujet à souffrir le délai d'un seul jour par la contrariété des vents ou

des courans, Votre Excellence mieux que moi en sait apprécier la valeur.

Si Sa Majesté L'Empereur daignait accorder en cette occasion le privilège que sollicite le Sieur Fulton je suis autorisé de sa part à en recevoir l'expédition. L'octroi pourrait être au nom seul de Robert Fulton de la ville de New York et de ses causes ou à son nom conjointement avec celui de Robert R. Livingston de Clermont dans l'État de New York et de leurs causes selon que serait le bon plaisir de Sa Majesté Impériale de l'accorder.

Veuillez bien agréer Monsieur le Comte, l'assurance de ma considération la plus distinguée.

St. Pétersbourg le 7 (19) October 1812.

## TO ROBERT FULTON

St. Petersburg, 19 October, 1812.

Sir:

I have recently received your favor of 24 April last and its duplicate, and avail myself of the first opportunity which has occurred to transmit an answer.

There is in this country no general law or established principle for grants of privileges to the authors of useful inventions. Special grants of this kind are sometimes made by express ordinances of the Emperor. I have therefore applied in your behalf directly to the Chancellor of the Empire, Count Romanzoff, and after a conversation with him in which I stated to him the object of your wish, as expressed in your letter to me, the success and utility of your steam boats in the United States, and my own personal conviction that they would prove eminently useful in this country, I have at his request submitted to him the sub-

stance of the same observations in writing. It is probable that some time may elapse before I shall receive from him a positive answer, but from the manner in which he received the proposition, and from the earnestness with which he is known to promote every object of public utility to his country, I am encouraged to hope that the application will prove successful. When I receive his answer I shall take the earliest opportunity of communicating it to you. . . .

## TO THOMAS BOYLSTON ADAMS

ST. PETERSBURG, 24 November, 1812.

SIR:

You know how deeply I was disappointed at the breaking out of our war, precisely at the moment when I entertained the most ardent and sanguine hopes that war had become unnecessary. Its events have hitherto been far from favorable to our cause, but they have rather contributed to convince me of its necessity upon principles distinct from the consideration of its causes. The termination of General Hull's campaign in upper Canada is known to us, as far as the English government have seen fit to make it known, by the dispatches from the Governor General and General Brock, and by the capitulation. We are informed also of an armistice agreed to by General Dearborn, which the President refused to ratify, and from these two portents I have come to the conclusion, which indeed it was not very difficult to anticipate before, that our projected invasion of Canada will end this year in total and most disgraceful defeat.

This misfortune, considered by itself, is not a very heavy one to the nation. But it is a deep mortgage of reputation to redeem. Its effects upon the spirits and dispositions of the

people present the most important light in which it is to be viewed, and these to my mind are problematical. If the effect upon the national sentiment should be similar to that of the *Chesapeake affair*, we shall not have ultimately much reason to regret the disasters of Hull's army, or the failure of our first military expeditions. Our means of taking the British possessions upon our continent are so ample and unquestionable that, if we do not take them, it must be owing to the worst of qualities, without which there is no independent nation, and which we must acquire at any hazard and any cost.

The acquisition of Canada, however, was not and could not be the object of this war. I do not suppose it is expected that we should keep it, if we were now to take it. Great Britain is yet too powerful, and values her remaining possessions too highly, to make it possible for us to retain them at the peace, if we should conquer them by the war. The time is not come. But the power of Great Britain must soon decline. She is now straining it so excessively beyond its natural extent, that it must before long sink under the violence of its own exertions. Her paper credit is already rapidly declining, and she is daily becoming most extravagant in the abuse of it. I believe that her government could not exist three years at peace without a national convulsion, and I doubt whether she can carry on three years longer the war in which she is now engaged without such failure of her finances as she can never recover. It is in the stage of weakness which must inevitably follow that of overplied and exhausted strength that Canada and all her other possessions would have fallen into our hands, without the need of any effort on our part, and in a manner more congenial to our principles and to justice than by conquest.

The great events daily occurring in the country whence I

now write you are strong and continual additional warnings to us, not to involve ourselves in the inextricable labyrinth of European politics and revolutions. The final issue of the campaign in the north of Europe is not yet completely ascertained, but there is no longer a doubt but that it must be disastrous in the highest degree to France, and no less glorious to Russia. It may not improbably end in the utter annihilation of the invading army, three fourths of which have already been destroyed. Whether the Emperor Napoleon will personally escape the fate which has befallen so many of his followers is yet doubtful, but it may be taken for granted that he will never be able again to assemble against Russia a force which can be formidable to the security or integrity of her empire. The politicians who have been dreading so long the phantom of universal monarchy may possess their souls in quietness. Never having been infected with the terror of it I shall desire no new source of tranquillity from these occurrences, but I cannot say that my foresight was clear enough to expect that the Colossus of French power would in so short a period be staggering upon its foundations so manifestly as it is. It is impossible not to consider the internal state of France as greatly depending upon the course of these external events. The empire of Napoleon was built upon victory alone. Defeat takes away its foundations, and with such defeat as he is now suffering it would be nothing surprising to see the whole fabric crumble into ruins. France, indeed, still remains a formidable mass of power, but into what condition she may be plunged by the overthrow of his government I am scarcely able to conjecture. The day of trial to Russia has been severe, but it has been short, and her deportment under it will raise her high in the estimation of mankind. Her plan of defence has the most decisive demonstration in its favor—

success—and success under numerous incidental circumstances disadvantageous to her. Not only her armies, but her peasantry, armed and sent into the field as if by enchantment, have fought with the most invincible courage, though not always with favorable fortune. The chances of war have been sometimes with and sometimes against them, but they have arrested the career of the conqueror of the age, and drawn him on to ruin, even when they have yielded him the victory.

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## TO ROBERT FULTON

St. Petersburg, 27 November, 1812.

Sir:

I have the pleasure to inclose, together with a duplicate of my last letter to you, copies of that which I addressed to the Chancellor of the Empire, Count Romanzoff in your behalf and of his answer, by which you will perceive that the Emperor has determined to grant you the privilege for the term of fifteen years, on condition that the grant shall be forfeited if the first boat should not be in operation within three years from the commencement of the privilege.

There will of course be nothing further for you to do than to procure the formal edict or ukase of the grant, which will meet with no difficulty, and which I only forbear obtaining now, because as the term of the privilege will commence from its date it will be most for your interest to postpone it until you can be prepared for the construction of the boat, and because I would leave it at your option to take the privilege in the joint names of Mr. Livingston and yourself, or in yours alone, and for the Russian rivers generally, or for

the passage between St. Petersburg and Cronstadt in particular—the Chancellor's letter indicating that these alternatives will be at your own choice.

If I can be of any further service to you in the attainment of your object here, it will afford me great pleasure to give you every assistance in my power. My motives for declining the remuneration suggested in your letter are chiefly two. The first, that I have no just claim to any remuneration for good offices which it would be my duty and my pleasure to render to promote any just and laudable interest of an individual fellow citizen, but which in this instance, associated with an object of great public utility and with an invention honorable to the genius and enterprise of my country, carry with themselves a reward amply sufficient for me. The second, that a personal confidence in my representation resulting only from my official character and situation may have contributed to induce the determination of the Emperor, and that in this view a sentiment of delicacy warns me that my intervention in this case should be divested of any particular interest of my own.

I have now only to assure you of my warm wish that your invention may be introduced here with as much benefit to the public and as profitable advantage to your own interest as it has been in the United States, and that I am with high esteem and consideration, sir, your very humble and obedient servant.

## TO ABIGAIL ADAMS

ST. PETERSBURG, 30 November, 1812.

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It may well be doubted whether in the compass of human history since the creation of the world a greater, more sudden and total reverse of fortune was ever experienced by man, than is now exhibiting in the person of a man whom fortune for a previous course of nearly twenty years had favored with a steadiness and a prodigality equally unexampled in the annals of mankind. He entered Russia at the head of three hundred thousand men on the 24th of last June. On the 15th of September he took possession of Moscow, the Russian armies having retreated before him almost as fast as he could advance, not, however, without attempting to stop him by two battles, one of which was perhaps the most bloody that has been fought for many years. He appears really to have concluded that all he had to do was to reach Moscow, and the Russian Empire would be prostrate at his feet. Instead of that it was precisely then that his serious difficulties began. Moscow was destroyed partly by his troops, partly by the Russians themselves. His communications in his rear were continually interrupted and harassed by separate small detachments from the Russian armies. His two flanks, one upon the Dwina and the other upon the frontier of Austria, were both overpowered by superior forces which were drawing together and closing behind him, and after having passed six weeks in total inaction at Moscow he found himself with a starving and almost naked army eight hundred miles from his frontier, exposed to all the rigors of a Russian winter, with an army before him superior to his own, and a country behind him already ravaged by

himself, and where he had left scarcely a possibility of any other sentiment than that of execration and vengeance upon himself and his followers. He began his retreat on the 28th of October, scarcely a month since, and at this moment, if he yet lives, he has scarcely the ruins of an army remaining with him. He has been pursued with all the eagerness that could be felt by an exasperated and triumphant enemy. Thousands of his men have perished by famine, thousands by the extremity of the season, and in the course of the last ten days we have heard of more than 30,000 who have laid down their arms almost without resistance. His cavalry is in a more dreadful condition even than his infantry. He has lost the greatest part of his artillery, has abandoned most of the baggage of his army, and has been even reduced to blow up his own stores of ammunition. The two wings of the Russian armies have formed their junction and closed the passage to his retreat, and according to every human probability within ten days the whole remnant of his host will be compelled like the rest to lay down their arms and surrender at discretion. If he has a soul capable of surviving such an event, he will probably be a prisoner himself.

Should he by some extraordinary accident escape in his own person, he has no longer a force nor the means of assembling one which can in the slightest degree be formidable to Russia. Even before his career of victory had ceased commotions against his government had manifested themselves in his own capital, on a false alarm of his death which had been in circulation. Now that, if he returns at all, it must be as a solitary fugitive, it is scarcely possible that he should be safer at the Tuileries than he would be in Russia. His allies, almost every one of whom was such upon the bitterest compulsion, and upon whom he has brought the most impending danger of ruin, may not content them-

selves merely with deserting him. Revolutions in Germany, France, and Italy, must be the inevitable consequence of this state of things, and Russia, whose influence in the political affairs of the world he expressly threatened to destroy, will henceforth be the arbitress of Europe.

It has pleased heaven for many years to preserve this man and to make him prosper as an instrument of divine wrath to scourge mankind. His race is now run, and his own turn of punishment has commenced. "Fret not thyself because of him who prospereth in his way, because of the man who bringeth wicked devices to pass; for yet a little while, and the wicked shall not be; yea, thou shalt diligently consider his place, and it shall not be." How often have I thought of this oracle of divine truth with an application of its sentiment to this very man upon whom it is now so signally fulfilling; and how ardently would I pray the supreme disposer of events that the other and more consolatory part of the same promise may now also be near its accomplishment: "But the meek shall inherit the earth; and shall delight themselves in the abundance of peace."

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## TO THE SECRETARY OF STATE

No. 102. [JAMES MONROE]

ST. PETERSBURG, 11 December, 1812.

SIR:

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I had on the 7th instant an interview with the Chancellor, Count Romanzoff, in which I communicated to him the substance of those parts of your dispatch which relate to Russia, and those which concern the state of our relations with

France. In the present state of the war between this country and France I was convinced that the view of the American government's intentions with regard to that power, so explicitly and so strongly manifested in your letter, would not only be gratifying to the Chancellor, but that it would be satisfactory to the Emperor, and would powerfully counteract any impressions unfavorable to the United States which the English interest here is endeavoring to excite. I therefore told the Count that, although I had not been instructed to make to him any official communication of the declaration of war, the dispositions of the American Government towards other powers, and particularly towards Russia on this occasion, had been distinctly suggested to me in a manner which I felt it my duty to make known to him. That the United States, compelled by unavoidable necessity to vindicate their violated rights against Great Britain by war, were desirous that it might be confined exclusively to them and their enemy, and that no other power might be involved in it. That it was particularly and earnestly their wish to propose and maintain in their fullest extent their commercial and friendly relations with Russia. That the war on which the Emperor is now engaged against France, although it could not be known by the President to have been actually commenced at the time when your dispatch was written, was, however, contemplated as more than probable, and the necessity which obliged the Emperor to take a part in it was mentioned to me as a cause of regret to the American government. But it was hoped it would not in the slightest degree affect the friendly dispositions between Russia and the United States. That I was informed by you that the principal subjects of discussion which had long been subsisting between us and France remained unsettled; that there was no immediate prospect that there would be a satisfactory

settlement of them; but that whatever the event in this respect might be, it was not the intention of the government of the United States to enter into any more intimate connections with France. This disposition I added was expressed in terms as strong and clear as I thought language could afford. It was even observed that the government of the United States did not anticipate any event whatever that could produce that effect, and I was the more happy to find myself authorized by my government to avow this intention, as different representations of their views had been widely circulated as well in Europe as in America.

The Count received this communication with assurances of his own high satisfaction at its purport, and of his persuasion that it could prove equally satisfactory to the Emperor, before whom he should lay it without delay. He said that with regard to the friendly and commercial relations with the United States *it was the Emperor's fixed determination to maintain them so far as depended upon him in their fullest extent. Even if he should enter into engagements more intimate than he was at present inclined to contract with any power whatsoever, he would assent to nothing which could interrupt or impair his relations of friendship with the United States;* and it was the wish that they not might not be liable to the interruption which they would be expected to suffer by the English, that had been his principal inducement to offer his mediation to effect a reconcilement. He asked me if I had any objection to his communicating to the British government itself that part of my information to him which related to France? I said that on the contrary, as the British government had in the course of our discussions with them frequently intimated the belief that the American government was partial to France, and even actuated by French influence, I supposed that the knowledge of this

frank and explicit statement, with a due consideration of the time and occasion upon which it was made, must have a tendency to remove the prejudice of the British cabinet, and I would hope produce on their part a disposition more inclining to conciliation.

Yesterday the Count sent me a note requesting me to call upon him again, which I accordingly did. He showed me the draught of a despatch to Count Lieven, the Russian ambassador in England, which he had prepared to lay before the Emperor for his approbation, and which related the substance of my conversation with him, particularly in regard to the intentions of the American government with reference to France, instructing Count Lieven to make it known to Lord Castlereagh, and to use it for the purpose of convincing the British government of their error in suspecting that of the United States of any subserviency to France; in the expectation that it would promote in the British ministry the disposition to peace with the United States which he (Count Lieven) knew his Imperial Majesty had much at heart, believing it equally for the interest of both powers and also for that of his own empire. The Chancellor said that as this despatch would refer to what I had verbally stated to him in our preceding conversation, he wished before submitting it to the Emperor that I should peruse it to satisfy himself that he had correctly represented the purport of my communication to him, and he assured me, if I should find any inaccuracy or variance from what I had said to him, to point it out to him that he might make the despatch precisely correspond with what I had said. I did accordingly [illegible]

formity with the ideas I had intended to convey. The changes were inconsiderable, and were no otherwise material than as I was desirous of the utmost accuracy in the relation of what I had said under the authority of your dispatch.

Although this communication of the settled determination of the American government, not to contract any more intimate engagements with France, will thus be made to the British ministry with my full consent, the Chancellor's dispatch does not say that he was authorized by me to make it. It merely relates the substance of that part of my conversation with him, and directs Count Lieven to use it with a view to promote the purpose of pacification. The Chancellor understands that my consent was merely my own act without authority from you, and my motive in giving it was the same with that of his instruction to Count Lieven, because I believed its tendency would be to promote the spirit of pacification in the British cabinet. I told the Chancellor that I was aware that its effect *might* be different. That the very certainty that we should not seek or even accept a community of cause with their most dreaded enemy might make them more indifferent to a peace with us. But in calculating the operation of a generous purpose even upon the mind of an inveterate enemy, I feel an irresistible impulse to the conclusion that it will be generous like itself.

I asked the Chancellor whether he had received an answer from England upon the proposal of the Emperor's mediation. He said that without accepting or rejecting it they had intimated the belief that it would not be acceptable in America. He added that they rested their expectations of peace with America upon the result of the American election. I am with great respect, etc.

## TO THE SECRETARY OF STATE

No. 103. [JAMES MONROE]

ST. PETERSBURG, 16 December, 1812.

SIR:

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An imperial manifesto has been published within these few days commanding a new levy of eight men upon every five hundred. It will raise nearly three hundred thousand. Part of them are already in the field as deductions will be allowed in the governments where one man in ten was actually furnished the last summer. Probably the new levy will not much more than fill up the ranks of the regular army thinned by the events of the war. The expense of human life in the memorable campaign not yet closed cannot be estimated at much short of half a million of souls; the numbers fallen on both sides are nearly equal. But it has changed the face of the world. Russia has henceforth nothing to fear from France. She must herself henceforth be the predominating power on the continent of Europe. The manifesto as I am informed disclaims all intention on the part of the Emperor of enlarging his own dominions by conquest, but declares that the object of this new armament is to accomplish a general peace upon principles of universal justice. A glory so rare and so truly exalted is worthy of the personal virtues of the Emperor Alexander and of the enlightened counsels which yet surround him. It was universally expected previous to the commencement of the war that it would be the signal at least for the retirement of the Chancellor. His character which has been much misunderstood and misrepresented by the partisans of English politics, appears

to have been more justly appreciated by his master. He still retains his office and apparently with favor unimpaired. In the moderation so honorably announced in the manifesto I am happy to see a pledge that the Emperor's sentiments in the hour of victory are still congenial to those which I know have been those of Count Romanzoff before this eventful struggle commenced. The English influence will continue to be as active as possible against him. In the last conversation I had with him he said to me, "I am happy to find that the English government do justice to the sentiments of the Emperor. More justice indeed than to those of his Chancellor." And as I know moderation will be the principle of the Count's political system, the lures of ambition and aggrandizement will be employed by the British and their partisans to stagger his credit and to press upon the Emperor counsels more suitable to their views. It is doubtless their purpose to make Russia subservient to their own policy. There is a steadiness in the Emperor's character which I trust they will find inaccessible to all their endeavors to shake it. So long as Count Romanzoff remains the first depositary of Imperial confidence their disappointment may be considered certain. I am with high respect, etc.

## TO ABIGAIL ADAMS

St. Petersburg, 31 December, 1812.

As another year is closing upon time and joining "the years beyond the flood," I cannot employ its last moments more satisfactorily to myself, or more consistently with the duties at all times incumbent upon me, than in renewing to my dear and honored parents the testimonies of my gratitude, duty and affection; in repeating the assurance of my

ardent desire to return to them, to my long absent children and to my country; and in offering to heaven the fervent prayer that my father and you may yet for many many succeeding years continue to be blessings upon earth to each other and to us, and to enjoy all the other blessings that a merciful providence has allotted to the condition of humanity.

A Mr. Andrew [1] of Salem left this place about three weeks since on his return to America. By him I wrote to you and my father, to my brother, and a short letter to my two sons at Atkinson. Since then I have not heard from you, nor from the United States at all. But an English gazette extraordinary has informed me of the surrender number two—Brigadier General Wadsworth and nine hundred men to Major General Roger Hale Sheaffe.[2] If we go on at this rate, it is to be hoped that there will be prisoners enough in Upper Canada to take it without needing any fire-arms. I perceive the Indians have the greatest share in the exploits of the British forces against us. Major General Brock was made a Knight of the Bath for taking General Hull, pretty much as Falstaff took Sir John Colevile of the Dale, who "gave himself away gratis." As General Brock will have no occasion for his "blushing ribband" when it arrives in America, the best use that could be made of it would be to give it to *Norton* who seems quite as much entitled to it on the score of merit and service as the conqueror of Detroit himself.

As this propensity to surrender appears to be an infectious distemper among our troops, I am in daily expectation of hearing the third instance of it, which I hope will be the

[1] John Andrew, who was the bearer of despatches for the government of the United States.

[2] At Queenstown, October 13.

last for some time. As I am willing to believe that we shall learn something by experience, I flatter myself that among the acquisitions which our warriors will make they will reckon that of receiving surrenders in return. If not, the best thing we can do will be to turn unanimously disciples of George Fox and William Penn, and be conscientiously scrupulous against bearing arms.

If indeed the practice of surrendering were about to become a military fashion, as from the numerous examples of it which within the last two months I have almost had under my eyes would seem probable, there might be reason to hope that war itself would lose some of its favor as the only occupation and amusement of mankind. In my last letter I gave you a sketch of the situation at that time of *Napoleon the Great*. There is no account yet that he has personally surrendered himself, but he has only saved himself by the swiftness of his flight, which on one occasion at least he was obliged to pursue in disguise. Of the immense host with which six months since he invaded Russia, nine-tenths at least are prisoners or food for worms. They have been surrendering by ten thousands at a time, and at this moment there are at least one hundred and fifty thousand of them in the power of the Emperor Alexander. From Moscow to Prussia, eight hundred miles of road have been strewed with his artillery, baggage wagons, ammunition chests, dead and dying men, whom he has been forced to abandon to their fate—pursued all the time by three large regular armies of a most embittered and exasperated enemy, and by an almost numberless militia of peasants, stung by the destruction of their harvests and cottages which he had carried before him, and spurred to revenge at once themselves, their country, and their religion. To complete his disasters the season itself during the greatest part of his retreat has been unusually

rigorous, even for this northern climate; so that it has become a sort of by-word among the common people here that the two Russian generals who have conquered Napoleon and all his Marshals are *General Famine* and *General Frost.* There may be, and probably is, some exaggeration in the accounts which have been received and officially published here of the late events; but where the realities are so certain and so momentous the temptation to exaggerate and misrepresent almost vanishes. In all human probability the career of Napoleon's conquests is at an end. France can no longer give the law to the continent of Europe. How he will make up his account with Germany, the victim of his former successful rashness, and with France, who rewarded it with an imperial crown, is now to be seen. The transition from the condition of France in June to her present state is much greater than would be from the present to her defensive campaign against the Duke of Brunswick in 1792. A new era is dawning upon Europe. The possibility of a more propitious prospect is discernible; but to the greatest disposer of events only is it known whether this new revolution is to be an opening for some alleviation to human misery, or whether it is to be only a variation of calamity.

It is not without some satisfaction that I have had the opportunity of being so near a witness to the great and decisive events of the year now ending. It has been full of moral and political instruction. To the Russian armies and generals it has also been a great military school, so great indeed as not altogether to leave reflection unconcerned what future uses may be made of what they have learnt. But as military instruction is of little use to me, I have only had in this respect the opportunity to observe the general features of the campaign. Its results have presented nothing new. The Fabian system, which succeeded in our rev-

olutionary war, which Lord Wellington has with equal success adopted in Spain and Portugal, and which even in this country had triumphed a century before over Charles the Twelfth of Sweden, has again been signally triumphant over the *Hero* of the present age; but his errors have been so gross and flagrant, that their consequences so fatal to himself can teach nothing to the military student but what had been taught a thousand times before. It is not the present disasters; it is the continuance of his former successes which may hereafter excite the astonishment of posterity.

The last result upon my mind in pondering over these occurrences is that it clings more fondly than ever to the principles of peace. There has been something so fascinating and so dazzling in the fortunes of this military adventurer and his followers, that it has kindled into tenfold fierceness all the flames of individual ambition throughout Europe. It has made millions of hearts pant for war which in ordinary times would have beaten only pulsations of tranquillity. War had become the only career of glory. It will cool some of this inflammation to see the Corsican Alexander shrinking into his natural dimensions, flying for his life like the most abject of cowards, and meeting, what he can henceforth scarcely fail to meet, a reverse of destiny as great and almost as wonderful as his elevation. Bonaparte as well as General Hull and his conqueror Brock may all exemplify,

> On what foundation stands the *warrior's* pride!

I have already mentioned that the season has been unusually rigorous. In the course of this month of December we have had seventeen days in succession with Fahrenheit's thermometer almost invariably below 0. I now write you at that temperature, and notwithstanding the stoves and double windows my fingers can hardly hold the pen. The

sun rises at a quarter past 9 in the morning, and sets a quarter before 3 in the afternoon; so that we must live almost by candle light. We are all literally and really sick of the climate. It is certainly contrary to the course of nature for men of the south to invade the regions of the north. Napoleon should have thought of that. So should the visitors of Upper and Lower Canada. The Normans to be sure—but they were exceptions to all general rules.

Again and again, my beloved mother, may the blessing of God rest upon you! with this sentiment I close the old and welcome the approaching year!

## TO JOHN ADAMS

ST. PETERSBURG, 12 January, 1813.

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In one of your last letters you observed to me that I was wasting my years here forgotten by my countrymen, though not forgetting them. I trust I never shall forget them wherever the providence of God may direct my wandering or cast a portion of my lot. But whether it would be any advantage either to them or to myself that I should be remembered by them, is known only to the all wise disposer. The only service that in the present circumstances of the world I could have a possible opportunity of rendering them would be to contribute a fervent though feeble effort to restore to them the blessings of peace. To them alone it belongs to determine whether the opportunity shall be allowed me, and if they deem it expedient, this will be the place where it may be indulged. As the war was commenced by a sort of fatality when the only indispensable cause for it was actually removed, I would still hope that it may be termi-

nated at an early period. It has been hitherto conducted on our part in a manner which I wish it were in my power and in that of the whole world to forget, but which will be too long and too effectually remembered.

Mr. Canning has become the representative for the city of Liverpool in the British House of Commons. Liverpool has been for nearly twenty years the most flourishing city in the British Island, and its prosperity has been almost entirely owing to the commerce with America. This fact is worth a volume of commentary to show the *disposition of the people of England towards* America. If there was a spot in the British dominions where a sentiment of regret for America might have been supposed to have some influence it was Liverpool, and Liverpool is the place where the most rancorous, malicious and vindictive enemy of America carries a triumphant and insulting election. His first speech in his new capacity was to reproach the ministers that after six months of war they had not destroyed the seaports of the United States. So you see the same spirit which prevailed when you prophesied to Lord Shelburne the second war still blooms in all its luxuriance. Canning boasted at the hustings that he had been twice offered the office of Secretary of State within six months, and it appears still highly probable that he will soon have it. The present ministers appear to be not quite so eager as he is to demolish the American seaports. I suppose they prefer operating in the style of Captain Henry's mission. I consider Canning's system as by so much the least formidable of the two; but if he comes in, the chance or the possibility of peace will be more precarious and remote than I think it is at present. Canning's war would do us just mischief enough to show the savage temper with which it would be pursued. It would be utterly impotent to produce any other effect than increased

exasperation and bitterness. It would very soon put down the British party among us, which is chiefly concentrated in those very seaports that Canning longs to see burnt.

The present British ministers rely upon the issue of our presidential election for peace. They have been told, and they believe, that if Mr. Clinton is the new President there is to be no question between the United States and them for discussion. Peace is to be asked for on such conditions as they shall choose to dictate, and the *maritime rights* of men-stealing and so forth are to be sanctioned forever. Anxiously as I sigh for peace I need not say to you that it is not for such a peace as that.

A career of good fortune rather than of success has followed the present British ministry since they were ultimately fixed in power, which will prolong their duration and exaggerate all their pretensions. The folly and disasters of the French Emperor will contribute to the same end. His Russian campaign is now terminated, and his defeat has been as signal and calamitous as any of his former successes had been dazzling. Whether his own government can stand the shock of such a tremendous campaign is at least problematical; but he has in six months crippled the power of France beyond all chance of restoration. Poland and Prussia he has already lost, and it is scarcely possible that the rest of Germany should not slip from his grasp and turn against him. Russia is the arbitress of Europe, and though she purchased the prerogative at an immense expense of blood and treasure, she has obtained it cheaper than her most sanguine friends could have expected. She has now in her turn become the invader, and probably the year now commencing will witness dangers on the European continent as great as those which have distinguished the last. I am etc.

## TO THOMAS BOYLSTON ADAMS

ST. PETERSBURG, 31 January, 1813.

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The English government have declared a *blockade* at Chesapeake Bay and Delaware river. New York and the coast of New England they leave open. They follow Captain Henry's advice, just as at the beginning of our revolutionary war they disfranchised Boston in favor of Salem. The spirit of 1775 seems to be extinct in New England; but I hope the profligacy of British policy will not be more successful now than it was then.

The war between us and them is now reduced to one point —impressment—a cause for which we should not have commenced a war, but without an arrangement of which our government now say they cannot make peace. If ever there was a *just* cause for war in the sight of Almighty God, this cause is on our side just. The essence of this cause is on the British side *oppression*, on our side *personal liberty*. We are fighting for the sailor's cause. The English cause is the press-gang. It seems to me that in the very nature of this cause we ought to find some resources for maintaining it by operations upon the mind of our own seamen and upon those of the adversaries. It is sometimes customary for the commanders of ships to address their crews on going into action, and to inspirit them by motives drawn from the cause they are called to support. In *this* war when our ships go into action their commanders have the best possible materials for cheering their men to extraordinary exertions of duty. How the English admirals and captains will acquit themselves on such occasion I can easily conjecture. But I fancy to myself a captain telling them honestly that they are

fighting for the cause of impressment; that having been most of them impressed themselves in the face of every principle of freedom of which their country boasted, they must all be sensible how just and how glorious the right of the press-gang is, and how clear the right of practising it upon American sailors as well as upon themselves must be. I think they will not very readily receive such arguments; no doubt they will keep them at their guns with others. But there may be times and occasions upon which the English seaman may be made to understand for what he is to fight in this war, and when it may have its effect upon the spirit with which he will fight. The English talk of the *seduction* practised by us upon their seamen. There is a seduction in the nature of this cause which it would be strange indeed if their seamen were insensible to it. I have heard that many of their seamen taken by us have shown a reluctance at being exchanged, from an unwillingness to be sent back to be impressed again. A more admirable comment upon the character of the war could not be imagined. Prisoners who deem it a hardship to be exchanged, with what heart can they fight for the principle which is to rivet the chains of their own servitude?

I have been reading a multitude of speculations in the English newspapers about the capture of their two frigates *Guerriere* and *Macedonian*. They have settled it that the American forty-fours are line of battle ships in disguise, and that henceforth all the frigates in the British navy are to have the privilege of running away from them. This of itself is no despicable result of the first half year of war. Let it be once understood as a matter of course that every single frigate in the British navy is to shrink from a contest with the large American frigates, and even this will have its effect upon the spirits of the tars on both sides. It differs a little

from the time when the *Guerriere* went out with her name painted in capitals on her fore-top sail in search of our disguised line of battle ship *President.*

But the English Admiralty have further ordered the immediate construction of seventeen new frigates to be disguised line of battle ships too. Their particular destination is to be to fight the Americans. Their numbers will be six to one against us, unless we too taking the hint from our success can build frigate for frigate, and meet them on their own terms; in which case if our new ships are commanded, and officered, and manned, like the *Constitution*, and *United States*, and *Wasp*, I am persuaded they will in process of time gain one step more upon the maxims of the British navy, and settle it as a principle that single English ships are not to fight Americans of *equal* force. Thus much I believe it will be in their power to do, and further I wish them never to go. I hope they will never catch the insolent affectation of seeking battle against superior force—an English pretension which has been so well chastised in the fate of their two frigates.

Our navy like all our other institutions is formed upon the English model. With regard to the navy at least the superiority of that model to all others extant is incontestable. But in the British navy itself there are a multitude of abuses against which we may guard, and there are many improvements of which it is susceptible and for which the field is open before us. Our three 44-gunships were originally built not as the English pretend for line of battle ships, but to be a little more than a match in force to the largest European frigates, and the experience, both of our partial war with France in 1798 and 1799, as well as our present war with England, has proved the wisdom of the principle upon which they were constructed. It has been a great and mo-

mentous question among our statesmen whether we should have any navy or not. It will probably still be a great question; but Great Britain appears determined to solve all our doubts and difficulties upon the subject. She blockades our coast and is resolved to crush us instantly upon the ocean. We must sink without a struggle under her hand, or we must have a navy.

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## TO THE SECRETARY OF STATE

No. 105. [JAMES MONROE]

ST. PETERSBURG, 2 February, 1813.

SIR:

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The war in its progress has been extremely destructive and distressing to Russia, but its result has been not only to deliver her entirely from that terror of the French Power which had spread itself so universally over the whole Continent of Europe, but to place in the hands of Russia herself that predominant influence which France had been so long and so perseveringly striving to establish. It is scarcely possible but that henceforth Russia should be the arbitress of Europe *by land*. Her loss of human lives in this dreadful struggle has probably been greater than that of France. Her loss of property has certainly been more considerable. But her losses have not been in the sinews of her strength. Those of France have been in the vitals of her military power. The spell of the Emperor Napoleon's name is not yet totally dissolved. His friends yet cherish a vague and general hope, and his enemies feel an involuntary fear, that his transcen-

dental *Genius* (so they term it) will yet burst forth, chain down Fortune at his feet, and range the world again conquering and to conquer. I see no substantial ground for such a hope, or such a fear. The highest probabilities now are that his fall will be as great as his elevation has been extraordinary; and with regard to his Genius, if it ever surpassed that of other great generals and statesmen, it has most assuredly deserted him in the undertaking and in the execution of the Russian war. That it was lightly, wantonly, unjustly undertaken, I have the most thorough conviction from an attentive and impartial observation of its rise and progress of which my communications from this place to your Department during that whole period contain the result. That in its execution the most flagrant and egregious blunders or imprudences continually insulted the indulgence of Fortune and produced his final overthrow, is equally clear and far more notorious. The genius that suffered the most inveterate of Russia's enemies, the Ottoman Porte, to conclude a disadvantageous peace with her at the very moment when he was invading Poland, released Admiral Tchitchagoff's army to force his right wing and close upon his rear on one side. The genius that drove Sweden under one of his own generals into the arms of Russia released another army from Sweaborg and the Finland frontier, with which Wittgenstein forced his left wing at Polotzk and closed upon his rear on the other side. The genius which rushed headlong on to Moscow in September, without foreseeing or preparing for the possible necessity of retreat in winter; and the genius which found ice and frost *premature* in November under Polish and Russian skies is not that sort of genius which, by the steadiness of its judgment and the immensity of its resources, redeems from such overwhelming ruin as that in which by such errors as those involved his

whole army. That he may still maintain his authority in France it would be presumptuous positively to deny. That he may again collect armies and win battles is altogether possible, and by errors not unlike his own may be rendered hereafter even probable. But in the general tenor of human history, when Fortune has once turned her back upon those to whom she has been most lavish of her favors, she never takes them to her own again. A cast-off favorite must look for anything but kindness.

In the annihilation of that immense host which but half a year since burst upon the Russian Empire providence has certainly reserved the greatest and most essential agency to itself. But in the conduct of the sovereign, of the nobility, of the citizens, of the peasantry, and of the army of this nation, under the heavy trial which they have been called to endure, it would be the highest injustice to deny that there has been little to censure and much to applaud and admire. The spirit of patriotism has burst with the purest and most vivid flame in every class of the community. The exertions of the nation have been almost unparalleled, the greatest sacrifices have been made cheerfully and spontaneously. I wrote you before the war began that it was anticipated with some dejection and despondency. But from the moment it began scarcely a symptom of that kind has ever betrayed itself among any class of the Russian people. In the most trying extremity they have been calm and collected, deeply anxious, but uniformly confident and sanguine in their hopes of the result.

On the 19th of December the Emperor Alexander left this city and on the 22d arrived at the headquarters of his army at Wilna. He is still with them and there is no present expectation of his return. The Chancellor, Count Romanzoff, has not yet followed him. A commercial treaty with Eng-

land is talked of among the merchants, but is not even in discussion between the governments. I am with great respect, etc.

## TO ABIGAIL ADAMS

St. Petersburg, 18 February, 1813.

As I shall probably not have an opportunity of dispatching letters for America after that of which I now avail myself, at least before the expiration of the present month, and as I am unwilling to break through the rule which I prescribed to myself of writing to you at least once every winter, I sit down to repeat to you what only three days since I wrote to my father, namely that I have not seen the handwriting of any of my friends at Quincy dated later than last April. I have however written to them, and had occasions to forward my letters to them as often as I did before the new wars. As yet I have heard of no new obstacles to the passage of Americans, most of them that have gone from this country since last summer have taken their course homeward by the way of England; but as the British government grows more inveterate as the war advances, I perceive by one of the last English newspapers received here that they have prohibited the embarkation of any person from their island to America without a *special license*, and I hear that they are taking other measures of rigor with the Americans captured by them since the war commenced. The Regent has also issued a manifesto in answer to that of our committee of Congress which recommended the declaration of war, but I have not yet seen it.[1]

The war against the United States appears to be now approved and supported by all parties in England, for the

[1] *Annual Register*, 1813, 330.

original opposition to the present Administration, very rashly and very unjustly, pledged themselves to join ministers upon this point of their policy, *if the revocation of the Orders in Council should not satisfy the Americans.* And now the ministers and their friends hold them to their word. Some of their parliamentary leaders are as wrong headed and stiff-necked in support of the press-gang as the ministry themselves, and the others dare not avow the disposition to compromise this point, because John Bull among his whimsies has taken it into his head that his trident is at stake upon the question, and they think he will look with an evil eye upon any one who advises him to abandon it. Cobbett is the only politician among them who has boldly and explicitly told this nation that they never can have a solid peace with America, while they practice impressment on board of American vessels at sea. But Cobbett is out of favor with all parties, and since he began to speak the language of truth and justice and humanity, has lost all credit with his countrymen. As to the fragments struck off from the ministry by their internal collisions, such as Wellesley and Canning, who form what was once called in America a *quid* party, they are among the bitterest of our enemies, and having been themselves the principal causes of the war very constantly say that nothing can be more just than a war with America now. But they are not at all satisfied with the conduct of the war. The Wellesley gazette (the *Times*) abuses the ministry for not having blown the American navy to atoms, and Canning abuses them in Parliament for not having ravaged our coast with fire and sword. They say in answer to the first, that they gave orders to their admirals on the American station to burn, sink and destroy all American vessels before the war began, and that they have constantly had on those American stations a force equal to

seven times the whole American navy. In answer to Canning they had the grace to say, not in Parliament but in the *Courier* their newspaper, that to ravage our sea coast with fire and sword would be trespassing a little upon the laws of nations and that it would be *spiteful*. But notwithstanding this we may be assured they will follow Mr. Canning's prescription if they can.

The war against American independence was for five years of its continuance one of the most popular wars that the nation ever waged, and it was seven before they could be convinced that they could not obtain by war the object of the war. Their real object in the present war is the dismemberment of the American Union. Their professed object is the press-gang. The war for the press-gang will be as popular as the war against American independence was, until we can convince them that they cannot obtain by war the object of the war. Were it possible to conceive that the success of the war upon the ocean would for seven years correspond to that of the first six months, my hopes would be sanguine that they would eventually be completely defeated in both their objects and that we should finally succeed in ours. But this cannot be expected. If our country could expend in three years as many dollars upon naval force as they expend pounds sterling in one, I should hold success for infallible; but as it is the chances are too unequal. Providence may interpose in ways of its own to vindicate the righteous cause, and I have had under my eyes the last half year a signal instance of such interposition. The cause against the press-gang is righteous, if there ever was one since the hand of man was armed against oppression. The cause of the press-gang is doubly atrocious as a British cause. Impressment as practiced upon their own subjects and within their own territory not only brands the nation

with the mark of the most odious despotism, but gives the lie to every pretence of freedom in their constitution. And as if it were to show how far the absurdity of human iniquity could go, the Helots of Britain are their sailors. The only class of people subjected to the most unqualified servitude, robbed of every right of personal liberty, kidnapped like African negroes, without resource or relief in the tribunals of their country, the outlaws of the land who have no rights in the eyes of kings' judges, because they are stolen from their families and employments to serve the king, are precisely the class of people who maintain with their blood the power, and dignity, and glory, nay, as their assassins say, the existence of their nation. They talk of our practising seduction upon their sailors. The charge is false and ridiculous. But in *this* war it would be strange indeed if there were not seduction to their sailors in the very nature of our cause. Our war is the sailors' war; it is surely enough if they force their seamen to die in battle for the press-gang. If their men are human beings, their hearts must be on our side.

The war as far as the British professions can be trusted is now reduced to this single point. What its issue will be must be left in the hands of him who scourges the vices and crimes of nations by war, and who has sent this for our chastisement as well as for that of our enemies. At the thought of what my country will suffer and go through before a rational prospect can open of her success in this contest my heart would sink within me, but for the reliance which I place in the divine goodness. There are great and glorious qualities in the human character which as they can unfold themselves only in times of difficulty and danger seem to make war from time to time a necessary evil among men. A nation long at peace seldom fails to become degraded. Symptoms of

this spirit of corruption were very visible in our country. God grant that in suffering the unavoidable calamities we may recover in all their vigor the energies of war! I am, etc.

## TO JOHN ADAMS

St. Petersburg, 15 February, 1813.

My Dear Sir:

Although the wars which broke out in the course of one week last summer both in Europe and America appear to have deprived our friends in the United States totally of the few opportunities which they had before of writing to us, so that we still remain without a line from any of them bearing a later date than last April, we have hitherto had the means of communication to them, particularly since the approach of winter, at least as frequently as we ever had before during our residence in this country, and I trust you will hear directly from us as often as before the war. There are here a number of Americans who upon concluding the business which brought them are successively departing to return home and, at least while the winter lasts, they are obliged to take the same course. They go by land to Gothenburg, thence in the British packets to England, where they have hitherto found no difficulty in obtaining permission to land or in meeting opportunities to embark for the United States. By some of them I have had the means of dispatching my letters at least once every month since the close of the last year's navigation, and I hope to have similar occasions to write by them from time to time until the return of summer. When that comes it is likely there will be neutral vessels going directly from hence as well as from Gothenburg to America.

I wish I could foresee any probability that a restoration of peace between the United States and England will open once more the highway of nations to our own vessels to pass to and from this country. But all the hopes of this that I had cherished have been fading into disappointment, and the events of the war hitherto have tended so much to exasperate and embitter on both sides without disabling either that I see no resource left in regard to the wish for peace but resignation to the will of heaven.

We are still ignorant of the issue of our presidential election, which the British ministry either believe or affect to believe to be the test of peace or war. It has even been asserted from publications in American gazettes to which I give not the least credit, that the candidate opposed against Mr. Madison was agreed upon by a coalition of very heterogeneous oppositions upon a special pledge that, if elected, he would within twenty-four hours after his installation suspend hostilities against Britain and commence a negotiation for peace. The English gazettes have seized with avidity this absurd tale, and circulated it throughout Europe to propagate the opinion that the war is in America considered merely as Mr. Madison's war, and that if his antagonist should be elected, the new President would rush into the arms of England without asking a question of Congress, and take just such a peace as my Lord Castlereagh should be pleased to give him. That the chance of peace will depend upon the event of the American election the British ministry have explicitly avowed to be their expectation, and their ambassador here, Lord Cathcart, some months since intimated to me in conversation the same thing. But there is a duplicity in the conduct of the British ministry towards America which makes it impossible to judge what they intend from what they say, unless by taking the exact counter-

part of their public professions for their real intentions. On the publication of Captain Henry's correspondence Lord Liverpool and Lord Castlereagh solemnly disavowed having ever intended to countenance any project for the dismemberment of the American Union, though it was so strongly urged on the face of Sir James Craig's instructions to Henry, and although Lord Castlereagh was forced to acknowledge that they had never expressed any disapprobation to Sir James Craig for having given those instructions. At the same time when Mr. Whitbread moved in the House of Commons for copies of Sir James Craig's correspondence, Lord Castlereagh refused them, and Mr. Whitbread despaired of being able to carry his motion and withdrew it. I have too much reason for believing that even when they revoked the Orders in Council it was only because they knew the measure would come too late to prevent the war. The opposition in England have lately charged them with having been taken by surprise and unprepared by the American declaration of war, and as the loss of their two frigates has made the nation sore, and given some color to this charge, an elaborate defence of them against it has been published in their principal newspaper disclosing the fact that instructions had been sent as early as last May to Admiral Duckworth on the Newfoundland station, to burn, sink and destroy all American vessels *on the slightest aggression by the Americans*. These instructions the writer urges must have been given to all the other British commanders on the American stations at the same time as to Admiral Duckworth. He sees that he can defend his patrons from the charge of negligence only by bringing down upon them the charge of perfidy; but to this they are so indifferent that he does not attempt to refute or even to deny it.

Even in the present Parliament Mr. Canning has censured

them in the House of Commons for not having answered the American ministers, and denied the charge of having been implicated in Henry's mission of dismemberment which he, Canning, disavows in the name of the whole ministry of which he was then a member. Very well, Mr. Canning. But Sir Robert Wilson, an officer of high distinction and certainly no enemy to the British ministry, asserted here at the table of an English gentleman (as I am informed) that Mr. Perceval at the time of his death was *determined* to have a war with America, and expected that the result of that war would be the dismemberment of the American Union. A gentleman present at the dinner, which was shortly after Lord Liverpool's and Lord Castlereagh's parliamentary disavowals, questioned the correctness of Sir Robert's information, upon which he replied, sir, my informant is Mr. Perceval; a very few days "before his death he told me so himself." With such facts in the face of such professions it is scarcely possible to indulge a hope of peace while the present British ministers are in power, unless it be such a peace which to the heart of an American feeling for the honor of his country would be worse than the most disastrous war.

The war in the north of Europe is for the present at an end. The dissolution of the Emperor Napoleon's army is so complete that the Russians who have entered Prussia and the Duchy of Warsaw advance now in the depth of an extremely severe winter without finding an enemy to oppose them. They go as friends and deliverers, and say they are everywhere received as such with joy and triumph. Napoleon has been now nearly two months at Paris, where a popular fermentation menacing the whole foundation of his government is said to be not very secretly working. A peace and alliance both with Austria and Prussia is expected here, and the negotiations though not public are believed to

be far advanced. The Emperor Alexander is with his army in the Duchy of Warsaw. I am, etc.

## TO THE SECRETARY OF STATE

No. 106. [JAMES MONROE]

ST. PETERSBURG, 16 February, 1813.

SIR:

Some weeks since there appeared in the English newspapers transmitted to this country several paragraphs asserting that Mr. Barlow had followed the Emperor Napoleon to Moscow, and a member of the British Parliament, distinguished as much for his rancor against the United States as for his eloquence, was reported to have stated in his place in the House of Commons in terms very injurious to the American government, that the object of Mr. Barlow's journey was to make the United States subservient to the views of France, by leaguing them with her in a treaty to destroy the independence of Spain. I well know that these assertions of Mr. Canning (as reported in the published debates) were in every particular erroneous—that Mr. Barlow was not gone to Moscow, and that he could have neither the design nor authority to engage the United States in any league hostile to the independence of Spain. I soon afterwards heard, through the medium of private letters received by Americans here, that Mr. Barlow had actually left Paris to go, not to Moscow but to Wilna, and Count Romanzoff informed me that he had been invited, together with two other foreign Ministers of governments in alliance with France, to go thither by a letter from the Duke of Bassano. I told the Count that it was impossible for me to

say what could be the motive upon which the Duke of Bassano had invited Mr. Barlow to Wilna, but I was perfectly sure his motive for complying with the invitation was not, and could not be, that ascribed to him in the English gazettes and Parliament.

Last week Count Romanzoff mentioned to me with many obliging expressions of regret that he had been informed that Mr. Barlow, as he was returning from Wilna intending to pursue his journey by the way of Vienna, had been taken ill on the road and died at Cracow.[1] He added that he had received this information from Prince Kurakin, the late Russian ambassador in France who is now at Vienna. That the Prince expressed great concern at this event, having received many and continual marks of kindness and good offices from him while they had both resided at Paris; and during the last months of the Prince's embassy, from the immediate prospect of rupture between the two Empires he had associated with scarcely any other person. That on the breaking out of the war, when the Prince left Paris, he had deposited in Mr. Barlow's custody the archives of the Russian embassy to be kept subject to the future orders of this government, and as Prince Kurakin did not know what disposition Mr. Barlow had made of them on his own departure from Paris, nor in whose care they might now be, he felt some anxiety for them. The Count requested me to write to Paris to ascertain where they were, and to give such directions for their further safe-keeping as might be necessary.

There was a young American here of respectable character desirous of going to Paris by the way of Vienna, and who had shortly before applied to me with a request that I would send any dispatches for either of those places that I would send

[1] Barlow died December 24, 1812.

them by him so that he might have the advantage of travelling with passports as a courier. But as I had no occasion to send at all to Vienna, and none of sufficient importance to send to Paris while Mr. Barlow was absent from that city and I was ignorant where he might be, I declined asking a courier's passport for Mr. Delprat (the young American of whom I speak), being apprehensive that in the state of the relations between this country Austria and France the notoriety which my dispatching a courier to Vienna and Paris might and probably would assume, might at least occasion surmises here or at Paris, and perhaps public falsehoods in England, like those raised upon Mr. Barlow's journey, which might have an operation injurious to the interests of the United States.

But upon being informed of Mr. Barlow's decease and requested by Count Romanzoff to write to Paris concerning the archives which had been deposited with him, I had a motive sufficient to ask the courier's passport for Mr. Delprat; and as this event had left me the only accredited minister of the United States in Europe, I thought it expedient with reference to our own public concerns to ascertain who was now charged with the affairs of the United States in France, and to open a communication with him. As Mr. Barlow is said to have died at or near Cracow, Mr. Delprat by taking the way through Vienna may learn the particular circumstances of this unfortunate incident, in which case I have requested him to give me information of them. Count Romanzoff very readily furnished the passport for Mr. Delprat, and I took such other precautions for obtaining his admission into Austria and France as were practicable here, and might prevent any of those idle conjectures and groundless suspicions and malevolent rumors, the probability of which had previously restrained me from

dispatching him as a courier. He left the city the day before yesterday.

It probably did not occur to Mr. Barlow before he left Paris that there was any necessity for him to give me notice of his journey, and to enable me, if not to give explanations of its real motives, at least to guard against the effect of such commentaries upon it as were transmitted hither from England. The difficulties of communicating might also prevent him from writing to me. On the authority of your dispatch of 1 July last I have denied with perfect confidence the truth of Mr. Canning's assertions, and I have no reason to believe that they have obtained any credit here.

In the tenth number of the French gazettes which I enclose by this opportunity, you will find an article under the date of Vienna mentioning Mr. Barlow's death. Since the commencement of the present year these gazettes are published under the auspices of the government, and I have thought them worth sending to you; particularly as they contain the series of the Russian Hand Bills with official advices from the armies. They will dispense me from sending you any more extracts from them in English translations. The Russian armies you will perceive are advancing into Prussia and the Duchy of Warsaw without meeting with any resistance. They are said to be everywhere received as friends and deliverers. But so were the French in Poland. With Prussia and with Austria there are negotiations for a separate peace. Lord Walpole, who was the secretary of the British embassy here, has been some months at Vienna. Austria has urged a negotiation for a general peace, but neither England nor Russia appear inclined at present to a peace with France. The British ambassador, Lord Cathcart, left this city last Friday for the Emperor Alexander's headquarters. I am, etc.

## TO ABIGAIL ADAMS

ST. PETERSBURG, 27 February, 1813.

At length after another interval of nearly seven months since I had been favored with the sight of a line from any of my friends at Quincy, yours of 29 July has come to hand. It is nearly seven months old, but is more than three months later than your previous letter. As it came under cover to Mr. Barlow I suppose it did not reach Paris until after his departure from that city. Thence it was sent back to Mr. Beasley, the agent for American prisoners of war in London, who transmitted it to me by the way of Gothenburg. If I am to remain here another winter, probably this will be the only channel through which you can write to me. If, as I suppose, cartels will continue to frequently pass between the United States and England, you can inclose letters under cover to Mr. Beasley, taking care as you always do to write nothing which could furnish a motive to anyone to intercept the letter.

You will probably know before this, or will very shortly, learn the decease of Mr. Barlow, very few particulars of which have as yet come to my knowledge. He received by order of the French Emperor an invitation from the Duke of Bassano, his Minister of Foreign Affairs, to go to Wilna, with which he complied. But the day before Napoleon passed through that city on his return to Paris Mr. Barlow left it, with the intention of returning thither through Vienna. On the road, and before he has reached Cracow, he was seized with a fever and inflammation of the lungs which stopped him in the midst of his journey; he would neither obtain suitable medical attendance nor any of the assistance which were essential to his recovery and died, I believe, at

the necessity and the right of allegiance (as if that included the right of impressment), and maritime rights, and French invasion, and Bonaparte. *Ergo* they will wage war for impressment from American merchant vessels on the high seas.

If the British government and the British navy are willing to consider American frigates as a match for English line of battle ships, I do not know that Americans ought to object to the compliment. Our 44's are certainly heavier frigates than their 38's, and supposing equal skill and bravery and fortune on both sides ought to take them. If the English admiralty build frigates heavier than ours, or cut down 74's to make them heavier than ours, and they meet our frigates, I suppose they will generally take them.

If on our side of the Atlantic we build and fit out only four seventy-four-gun ships, and they are given to such men as Isaac Hull, and Decatur, and Jones, we may flatter ourselves that they will soon pass for three deckers in disguise. But before the discovery is made I trust no English sixty-four will go in search of one of them with her name painted upon her [illegible].

[illegible] making to carry on the war against us [illegible] but not for dis- [illegible] When the [illegible] country drew the [illegible] believe that they had [illegible] My heart aches [illegible] country [illegible] terminate [illegible] If war must [illegible]

I think of the *cause*, and with that humble diffidence which should accompany all mortal reliance upon divine power, I believe that there is one stronger than the British navy on our side.

It may occasion some surprise in America that the English opposition and their gazettes distinguish themselves only by their superior inveteracy against us. From the Wellesleys and the Cannings indeed no other was to have been expected; but to find the ministry goaded and spurred to excessive exertions against us by the very party which had been most averse to the war and still professes to lament it, might astonish anyone not accustomed to all the obliquities of party spirit. The very *Morning Chronicle*, which bewails the infatuation which could make two nations whose common interests, and principles, and feelings, so loudly admonish them both to be at peace, yet rushing into war, is incessantly stinging the admiralty to measures which can only tend to increased exasperation and bitterness between the two nations. Mr. Canning's rattling eloquence might tell the electors at Liverpool that vigorous war was the only way to bring the American government to their senses; he might hurl his fire brands at our seaport towns from his seat in the House of Commons; we have too long known his temper and his principles to look for anything in him but a vindictive and remorseless enemy. But to find, if not the same spirit, at least the same style of argument used by those who have heretofore held forth a conciliatory policy towards America, would appear inexplicable, were it not elucidated by the apparent motive of making every thing subservient to the purpose of running down the ministry. N. B. this paragraph omitted. I am, etc.

## TO JOHN ADAMS

ST. PETERSBURG, 22 March, 1813.

MY DEAR SIR:

Towards the close of last summer there arrived here as a sort of semi-official appendage to the British Embassy an old acquaintance of yours, Sir Francis d'Ivernois, who as you know has been for many years a distinguished political writer in the French language and in the interest of the British government. He came not, I believe, with but very soon after the ambassador, Lord Cathcart. Just at the same time a lady of celebrated fame, Madame de Staël, the daughter of Mr. Necker was also on a transient visit. As I had not the honor of being personally known to Madame de Staël, and as we had just received information of the American declaration of war against Britain, I had no expectation of having any communication or intercourse either with the ambassador or the lady. And I regretted this the less as my whole soul was at that period absorbed in the distressed situation of my family, and in the sufferings and departure of the angel that was our child.

Early one morning I received a note from Madame de Staël, requesting me to call at her lodgings that same day at noon, as she wished to speak to me on a subject respecting America. I went accordingly at the hour appointed, and on entering the lady's *salon* found there a company of some fifteen or twenty persons, not a soul of whom I had ever before seen. An elderly gentleman in the full uniform of an English general was seated upon the sofa and the lady, whom I immediately perceived to be Madame de Staël, was complimenting him with equal elegance and fluency upon the

glories of his nation, his countrymen, Lord Wellington and his own. The Battle of Salamanca and the bombardment of Copenhagen were themes upon which much was to be said and upon which she said much. When I went in she intermitted her discourse a moment to receive me and offer me a seat which I immediately took, and for about half an hour had the opportunity to admire the brilliancy of her genius as it sparkled incessantly in her conversation.

There was something a little too broad and direct in the substance of the panegyrics which she pronounced to allow them the claim of refinement. There was neither disguise nor veil to cover their naked beauties, but they were expressed with so much variety and vivacity that the hearer had not time to examine the thread of their texture. Lord Cathcart received the compliments pointed at himself with becoming modesty, those to his nation with apparent satisfaction, and those to the conqueror of Salamanca with silent acquiescence. The lady insisted that the British nation was the most astonishing nation of ancient or modern times, the only preserver of social order, the exclusive defenders of the liberties of mankind; to which his Lordship added that their glory was in being a *Moral Nation*, a character which he was sure they would always preserve. The glittering sprightliness of the lady and the stately gravity of the ambassador were as well contrasted as their respective topics of praise, and if my mind had been sufficiently at ease to relish anything in the nature of an exhibition, I should have been much amused at hearing a French woman's celebration of the English for generosity towards other nations, and a lecture upon national morality from the commander of the expedition to Copenhagen.

During this sentimental duet between the ambassador and ambassadress I kept my seat merely an auditor. The

rest of the company were equally silent. Among them was an English naval officer, Admiral Bentinck, since deceased. He was then quite the chevalier d'honneur to Madame de Staël; but whether the scene did not strike him precisely as it did me, or whether his feelings resulting from it were of a more serious cast than mine, the moment it was finished and the ambassador had taken leave he drew a very long breath and sighed it out, as if relieved from an oppressive burden, saying only, "thank God! That's over!" He and all the rest of the company immediately afterwards retired and left me tête à tête with Madame de Staël. Her subject respecting America was to tell me that she had a large sum in American funds, and to inquire whether I knew how she could contrive to receive the interest which she had hitherto received from England. I gave her such information as I possessed. She had also some lands in the state of New York of which she wished to know the value. I answered her as well as I could, but her lands and her funds did not appear to occupy much of her thoughts. She soon asked me if I was related to the celebrated Mr. A. the author of the book upon government. I said I had the happiness of being his son. She replied that she had read it and admired it very much. That her father, Mr. Necker, had also always expressed a very high opinion of it. She next commenced upon politics and asked how it was possible that America should have declared war against England? In accounting for this phenomenon I was obliged to recur to a multitude of facts, not so strongly stamped with British generosity or British morality as might be expected from such a character as she and the ambassador had been assigning to that nation. The Orders in Council and the press-gang afforded a sorry commentary upon the chivalresque defence of the liberties of mankind and no very instructive lessons of morality. She had nothing to say in their

justification, but she thought the knights-errant of the human race were to be allowed special indulgence, and in consideration of their cause were not to be held to the ordinary obligations of war and peace. There was no probability that any argument of mine could make impression upon opinions thus toned. She listened however with as much complacency as could be expected to what I said, and finally asked me why I had not been to see her before? I answered that her high reputation was calculated to inspire respect no less than curiosity, and that however desirous I had been of becoming personally acquainted with her, I had thought I could not without indiscretion intrude myself upon her society. The reason appeared to please her; she said she was to leave the city the next day at noon, she was going to Stockholm to pass the winter, and afterwards to England. She wished to have another conversation with me before she went and asked me to call and see her the next morning. I readily accepted the invitation and we discussed politics again two or three hours. I found her better conversant with rhetoric than with logic. She had much to say about social order, much about universal morality, much about the preservation of *religion*, in which she gave me to understand she did not herself believe, and much about the ambition and tyranny of Bonaparte, upon which she soon discovered there were no difference of sentiment between us. But why did not America join in the holy cause against this tyrant? First, because America had no means of making war against him. She could neither attack him by sea nor by land. Secondly, because it was a fundamental maxim of American policy not to intermeddle with the political affairs of Europe. Thirdly, because it was altogether unnecessary. He had enemies enough upon his hands already. What! did I not dread his universal monarchy? Not in the least. I saw indeed a very

formidable mass of force arrayed under him, but I saw a mass of force at least as formidable arrayed against him. Europe contained about 160 millions of human beings. He was wielding the means of 75 millions, and the means of 85 millions were wielding against him. It was an awful spectacle to behold the shock and I did not believe and never had believed that he would subjugate even the continent of Europe. Had there ever been any real danger of such an event it was past. She herself saw that there was every prospect of his being driven very shortly out of Spain, and I was equally convinced he would be driven out of *Russia*. It was the very day of the battle of Borodino. *J'en accepte l'augure*, said she. Everything that you say of him is very just, but I have particular reasons for resentment against him. I have been persecuted by him in the most shameful manner. I was neither suffered to live any where, nor to go where I would have gone; and all for no other reason but because I would not eulogize him in my writings.

As to our war with England I told her that I deeply lamented it, and yet cherished the hope that it would not last long. That England had forced it upon us by measures as outrageous upon the rights of an independent nation as tyrannical, as oppressive, as any that could be charged upon Bonaparte. Her pretences were retaliation and necessity. Retaliation upon America for the wrongs of France! and necessity for man stealing! We asked of England nothing but our indisputable rights. But we allowed no special prerogatives to political Quixotism. We did not consider Britain at all as the champion for the liberties of mankind, but as another tyrant pretending to exclusive dominion upon the ocean—a pretension full as detestable, and I trusted in God full as chimerical, as the pretension of universal monarchy upon the land. Madame de Staël "was of her opinion

still." But on the point of impressment she admitted that my observations were reasonable. I have never yet found an European of any nation but the British who on having this question in its true statement brought to a precise point had a syllable to say for the English side. In conclusion I told her that the pretended retaliation of England had compelled her to resort to real retaliation upon them, and that as long as they felt a *necessity* to fight for the practice of stealing men from American merchant vessels on the high seas we should feel the *necessity* of fighting against it. I could only hope that God would prosper the righteous cause.

Madame de Staël on my taking leave of her charged me if ever I should be again in any place where she should be at the same time not to neglect paying her a visit, which I very willingly promised. She left St. Petersburg the same day. I should ask Sir Francis d'Ivernois' pardon. I began this letter with him, but whom can one help deserting for Madame de Staël? I will return to Sir Francis by the next opportunity, having now only room to say that I am, etc.

## TO ABIGAIL ADAMS

St. Petersburg, 25 March, 1813.

My last letter to you, dated 27 February, acknowledged the receipt of your favor of 29 July, the latest letter I have from America, and which you mention in it was to be forwarded by Mr. B. Beale, junior.

I have now an opportunity to write by Mr. Plummer,[1] a young man who had been here several years as an agent of Col. Thorndike. He himself belongs to Salem, and as he

[1] Ernestus Plummer.

intends returning as directly as he can to Boston he has offered personally to deliver any letters which I may wish to send to you. I therefore charge him with this and with one for my father, which I hope will safely reach him.

We have learnt through the only channel now open for news to reach us from America, that is, the English newspapers, that Mr. Madison has been re-elected and that Mr. Gerry is chosen Vice President. It may give you a sample of the degree of ignorance in which we live of American affairs to be informed that we did not know until this account of the votes came who was the candidate for the Vice President to be run with Mr. Madison. We had heard mention of Mr. Langdon and Mr. Gerry, and in the first instance had been told that Mr. Langdon was the person fixed upon. We had been assured that the *federalists* were to vote for Mr. De Witt Clinton as President, and Mr. Jared Ingersoll as Vice President, candidates so singularly coupled together, and the first of them so strange a name for a *federal* candidate, that I assure you it was long before I believed it possible that it should be so, and for which even now I can account only upon the principle of Shakespeare's Trinculo that, "Misery acquaints a man with strange bed fellows." We have heard no reason whatever assigned why General C. C. Pinckney and Mr. King, federal men, and the federal candidates at the two preceding elections, men so respectable by their personal characters, by their talents, by their public services, have on this occasion been totally abandoned by their party for two candidates, entirely new, certainly very respectable, and I doubt not very able men, but one of whom has for five and twenty years employed himself with something more profitable than politics, and whose federalism has always been questionable, while the other has risen to power and importance by the very ardor and

vehemence of his opposition to federalism. It is said that opposition to the war with England is the connecting principle which has brought together parties hitherto heterogeneous. But were General Pinckney and Mr. King less averse to the British war than Mr. Clinton and Mr. Ingersoll? Or have the federalists voted for those gentlemen upon the same basis as their representatives, and voted for Mr. Burr not for the sake of choosing him but for that of excluding Mr. Jefferson?

We have indeed had it repeated over to satiety here for the last twelve months, both from the English periodical journals and from private advices through federal sources, that the war was so extremely unpopular in the United States that it would occasion the loss of Mr. Madison's re-election. But now the tables are so completely turned that we hear it said Mr. Madison made the war for the sole purpose of securing his election. Who shall decide when doctors disagree with themselves? The English journals tell us that in the debates of Congress Mr. Randolph and Mr. Quincy both charge this intention directly upon Mr. Madison. These are reproaches which for aught I know may gratify party feelings, but which appear neither very politic nor very liberal. Mr. Randolph is represented to have pleaded very pathetically against the war between the *only* two nations upon earth who worshipped the one only and true God, and who were jointly engaged in the endeavor to communicate their religion to the heathen of the East. Though I by no means think with Mr. Randolph that Britain and America are the *only* worshippers of the true God, and perceive nothing like the Christian spirit of charity in the assertion, I was very much gratified to find him using this principle of *religion* as a topic of argument. For in the first place, I considered it as evidence that Mr. Randolph himself is a believer in Christianity,

penetrated with its truths, and accessible to its principles. Secondly, I was glad to see religious motives urged as topics of persuasion in that house by one of its most eloquent speakers. It indicated a temper in the hearers as well as in the orator which ought to be cherished by them all, and which I would fondly hope may eventually contribute to shorten the war. And thirdly, it led to the hope that this motive would have its influence upon the enemy as well as upon ourselves. If those upon whom peace and war in the two nations depend would on both sides seriously consider their duties as fellow Christians, there would be nothing more necessary to produce conciliation and peace. But manstealing is not a Christian practice, and when a government has brought itself to the condition of waging war expressly and avowedly for it, they may be very willing to preach the Gospel to the East, but there is very little prospect of their laying it to their own hearts.

The people among whom I reside are religious to a very high degree and would be strangely shocked to hear themselves excluded from the class of worshippers of the true God. Their religion is, indeed, encumbered with innumerable superstitions and armies of saints and miraculous relics, and images, and trivial formalities. It is but four days since I saw the two Empresses and all the members of the Imperial family now in the city prostrate themselves before an old picture called a miraculous image of the Virgin Mary, by way of gratitude for the taking of Berlin by the Russian troops. I have seen them seven or eight times go through the same ceremony within as many months. The occurrences of the last year in the history of this country have been full of real prodigies and they have been attributed by many of the people here to quite as many prodigies of the spurious kind. Notwithstanding which there are no more

fervent worshippers of the true God than the Russians. They are now in the midst of their spring Lent, the longest and most rigorous of the four. At this season all the theatres are shut. Neither balls nor assemblies are allowed. In the highest ranks of society those who keep open house all the rest of the year will scarcely receive a single visitor. Concerts are the only amusements which are indulged to the public. The rule of fasting in the first and last weeks of this Lent is so rigid that they are allowed scarcely anything but bread and oil and dried mushrooms to subsist upon; and I was told a few days since by a Russian that the common people here believed murder to be a crime for which atonement might be possible, but that there would be none for dining upon animal food in Lent.

The season is becoming mild and the ice of the River Neva is not more than three feet thick. On one month from this time the River itself will be open. Oh! that I could take, not the wings of the morning and fly to the uttermost parts of the East, but the wings of a fast sailing ship and swim to the nearest parts of the West. I foster the hope of yet seeing you and my father, and my brother, and my boys before the close of this present year. I have not yet received my recall and know not how I shall get home if it comes. But all things are possible, and for what we so ardently desire bare possibility is a foundation for hope. Of my family I have nothing now to say. I cannot even say that my wife or Charles is well. They never I fear will be well during the winter in this climate. May the approach of summer entirely restore them both! I am, etc.

## TO THOMAS BOYLSTON ADAMS

ST. PETERSBURG, 3 April, 1813.

. . . . . .

I cheerfully acquiesced in the arrangement by which my two sons were placed at Atkinson, where I knew they would receive every kind attention that our excellent Aunt could show them; but I am more gratified to know them so much nearer to my father and mother and you as they are at Hingham. It is more than a year since the date of the last letter received from them. They have now reached an age, George particularly, when he ought to write me by every opportunity and I beg you to remind him of this duty. I trust he will be seriously preparing himself for College, and I hope he will devote his most strenuous application to the Latin and Greek languages. I wish he may have no occasion to change his school again, unless it be for tuition from myself, until he enters College. For a frequent change of schools very much abstracts and delays the progress of a boy in the acquisition of classical learning. It was one of the inconveniences in my own education, that from the commencement until the close of my classical studies I was continually changing schools and teachers. In my case it was unavoidable and the injury resulting from it on one side was compensated by advantages which it afforded on the other. But the consequence has been that I have always had "small Latin and less Greek." And the little I have has contributed so much to the uses, the comforts and the pleasures of my life that I have always lamented the shallowness of the streams with which I have been indulged from those inexhaustible fountains of virtue, elegance, and taste. I hope my sons will be much more accomplished scholars than

their father is or can ever be, but if they often change their schools I shall not expect it.

As the walk from Hingham to Quincy is now only five miles, they will I doubt not traverse it as often as the usual relaxations from their attendance at the Academy will admit. When I was of their age I remember with what delight I used to walk over to Grandfather's at Weymouth, which was then about at the same distance. It is as you remark about the old walnut desk and the spot where we were born. There is a charm in the remembrance of our infancy which to my feelings becomes more vivid the farther I advance in years. Those were times of public distress, and terrors, and sufferings, still more than the present. I remember the melting of the pewter spoons in our house into bullets immediately after the 19th of April, 1775. I remember the smoke and the flames of Charlestown which I saw from the orchard on Penn's Hill. I remember the packing up and sending away of the books and furniture from the reach of Gage's troops, while we ourselves were hourly exposed for many months to have been butchered by them. All this has passed away like a troublous dream, and all this adds pleasure to every recollection of that time. The same spirit from the same nation has now kindled against us another war. I pray God that it may not expose the infancy of our children to such perils as those which surrounded your childhood and mine. But if it is the will of Providence that it should, my next prayer is that to them, as to me, after the lapse of forty years, the alarms and dangers which befall them in consequence of their country's struggle for her rights may serve but to rivet their affections to their country and her cause, and to mingle the remembrance of evils overcome and of deliverance from distress with all the first traces of conscious existence and of opening intellect. Complete redemption

from imminent calamity is among the sweetest enjoyments of human life. You and I sympathize so generally in our sentiments upon political affairs that even while separated at this distance from each other I seldom have occasion to ask what you think upon any public concern in any other manner than by consulting my own heart. Your remarks upon the issue of the presidential election have given me a fresh example of the identity in the process of our thoughts concerning the same event. I rejoice at Mr. Madison's reëlection and at Mr. Gerry's election, because it has proved the spirit of the nation to be still determined in support of their rights. They have trials to go through in its progress which give me already many a bitter pang of anticipation, and among the keenest of them is that of witnessing our own section of the Union at heart in the enemy's quarters. If our people were united, I should neither have a doubt of our ultimate success nor consider the war itself as seriously formidable. On the question of impressment, the only hinge upon which the war now turns, all the parties in England have combined against us. They have, therefore, besides all their other advantages that of united counsels against us, while ours are fearfully divided in opposing them. They have in short everything against us but a righteous cause. It is for the practice of manstealing from our ships upon the ocean that the nations are to be drenched in blood. Is it possible that a righteous providence should smile upon such a cause? Is it possible that our country should submit to a peace stipulating formally or tacitly to endure the continuance of such an indignity? It is now for the God of Battles to decide and to him only must it be left.

The continent of Europe is just commencing the progress of a counter revolution, the end of which it is yet impossible to foresee. The frosts of Russia and Poland have struck at

the roots of Napoleon's laurels and of his power. In September he entered Moscow as a conqueror, and in March his enemy took possession of his "good city" of Hamburg. All Germany is in combustion. Prussia has deserted her banners, and rallies all the remnants of her force under the standard of Alexander. Denmark has implored peace of England, her despoiler, and has been rejected. Austria negotiates and dissembles, and aims probably to join at last the new coalition against her ancient foe; and France has the most imminent prospect of being reduced at least to her ante-revolutionary dimensions, and perhaps to the restoration of the Bourbons. Nothing less than this is now intended, and between this design and its accomplishment there is now nothing but the life and the genius of Napoleon to interpose. For his fortune has deserted him, and of his genius independent of his fortune I have never entertained a very exalted opinion. Caesar was once in perhaps as great a strait as he now is and extricated himself from it. But to extricate himself he must possess greater resources of genius than were ever employed by Caesar, and I do not yet believe that he has them to display. Yours affectionately

## TO ABIGAIL ADAMS

St. Petersburg, 7 April, 1813.

I know not whether it was generosity, or any other virtue, or merely a disposition to receive the postage, that induced the transmission of your favor of 30 December to Mr. Williams, at London; for by him it was kindly forwarded to me, and on the first day of this month to my inexpressible joy came to hand. It was but so short a time before that I had received your letter of 29 July, and excepting that, not a line

from Quincy later than April of the last year. This last letter had apparently been opened, although the impression of your seal upon the wax was restored—a circumstance which indicates that it was done in England, where they still affect the appearance of not breaking seals at the Post Office. On this continent they are less scrupulous about forms. When they open letters they break the seals, and do not take the trouble of restoring them. They send them open to their address. It reminds me of an anecdote I have lately met with of Prince Kaunitz when he was Prime Minister of the Empress Maria Theresa. One of his clerks whose business it was to copy the *opened* letters coming to foreign ministers at Vienna, in the hurry of reclosing a dispatch to one of the envoys, sent him his copy instead of the original. The envoy went to Prince Kaunitz, showed him the copy that he had received, and complained that the original was withheld from him. The Prince immediately sent for the clerk, severely reprimanded him in the envoy's presence for his blunders, and directed him to bring instantaneously the original dispatch. The clerk brought it accordingly, and the Prince gave it to the envoy with many apologies for the trouble occasioned him by the clerk's mistake, and assurances of his hope that it would never occur again.

In the *present* state of the relations between us and Britain I have nothing to say, if they open letters to me or from me which they get fairly into their hands. But I should think it more creditable to them if they did not attempt the imposition of restoring the inscription of the seals.

Next to the delight which it gave me, to know that my father and you and my boys were all in good health (which may God Almighty preserve), was that of being informed that my children were so much nearer to you than at Atkinson. I know how kindly my dear Aunt would attend to

them, but my father, and you, and my brother, nobody could supply your places for the progress of their education, and the thought that they *could* have the opportunity of seeing you at most only two or three times in a year was an affliction to me which their residence at Hingham will relieve. Should it be my destiny to stay much longer in Europe I wish them to be sent to me. I hope in a few months to know upon what I am to depend. My constant wish has been to return to the United States the present year, and I have long since written both to the President and the Secretary of State. There are however circumstances, known I trust to them ere this, and probably to you, which place it altogether at the President's determination whether I shall have either occupation or motive for remaining here some time longer. The communications transmitted to our government from hence last October, I presume will be no secret in America, whatever the result of them may be. If they are received, as it is my wish they may be, the measures adopted in consequence of them *may* make it my duty, as it will be my inclination, to postpone my return home for a season. If they are viewed in a different light, I shall have stronger reasons than ever for wishing myself as speedily as possible in my native country, in the bosom of my family, and devoted entirely and exclusively to the support of my family and the education of my children. Should I receive the President's permission to return this year, I suppose it will be possible for me to return by the way of England. I should indeed be obliged to ask it as a favor of the British government, which would not be very pleasant to my feelings. There has been one instance of the same kind since our residence here. Count Stedingk who had been the Swedish ambassador here returned home by water in July, 1811, while Sweden and England were at war. The British

miral in the Baltic gave without hesitation a special permission to pass without annoyance to the vessel which came for him, and in which he returned. There is more bitterness and inveteracy in their war with America than in that against Sweden, for they have wronged America too much to forgive her, and Sweden had declared war against them without provocation. Yet I do not expect they would deny me what they so readily granted to Count Stedingk.

Of peace, unless eventually produced by a course and through a channel at which I have already hinted, I now utterly despair. Our new 74's and frigates will only protract and obstruct every prospect of peace. The prodigies performed by our apology for a navy (to call it a navy is ridiculous) have had the same effect, and so have our disgraces in Canada. There is a national spirit among the British which such successes and such defeats grasp at with equal eagerness to unite all parties against us. We are a more virtuous and less vicious people than the British: but of that national spirit which is a political virtue of the highest order, we have much less than they. Under our present administration I have no fear that we shall subscribe to a disgraceful and degrading peace, and from the temper of the British government at this time there is little expectation of any disposition in them for any other.

The conflagration of Moscow, and the sufferings of the Russian Empire under the formidable invasion of the last summer, were awful visitations of Heaven, but they have been succeeded by prosperity and successes without example in modern history. The iron crown of Napoleon, and his Imperial Crown too, will henceforth be but crowns of thorns to him. His violence and injustice are recoiling upon his own head. Russia, Poland, Prussia, all the north of Germany are delivered from his power, and the cities of

Lübeck and Hamburg which have been formally annexed to the French Empire are already in possession of the Russians. His internal government is convulsed even at Paris, and the pretensions of the House of Bourbon are again advanced, under the patronage of the British government, and perhaps of Russia. The situation of France has never been so precarious and in such imminent danger since the Duke of Brunswick's invasion of Champagne in 1792; and instead of universal monarchy, or even the preponderancy of power in Europe, she has now the prospect before her of being called again to contend for her ancient boundaries. Whether the happiness of mankind or the peace of the world will gain anything by this new revolution in the affairs of Europe is yet among the secrets of Providence. That Russia should maintain, and that Germany should recover their independence, and that Spain, Portugal, and Italy should have the same good fortune in the south is undeniably desirable; but when ambition is controlled only by ambition, and one boundless lust of domination is only exchanged for another, humanity gains very little by the substitution. At present Russia is the arbitress of Europe. Of her wisdom and moderation I am not inclined to doubt. She has gloriously stood the trial of adversity, which was severe but short. She has now the stronger test of prosperity to endure. The character of her sovereign promises much for the relief of our species. I trust he will not catch the infection of passions which would only prolong the scenes of horror and devastation that have so long been desolating Europe.

I learn with much pleasure that Colonel Smith is to be a member of the present Congress, though I should prefer seeing him in the field. I sicken at the name of Canada. Will bitter experience teach us wisdom? God grant that it may! and bless the country and the parents of your affectionate son.

## JAMES MONROE TO JOHN ADAMS

WASHINGTON, April 10, 1813.

DEAR SIR:

Since writing the letter enclosed to Mrs. Adams, I have conferred with the President on the subject of your son's return, and am authorized to state to you that in case of peace with Great Britain, the mission to London will be offered to him. The conduct of your son, it gives me pleasure to state, has obtained the entire approbation of the President. It is hoped that it will suit his convenience to take part in the negotiation for peace should Great Britain accept the mediation of Russia, as is presumed, and in forming a commercial treaty with both those powers, as is contemplated. His knowledge of the subject in relation to both, makes it of great importance that his country should have the advantage of his services in those important transactions. In regard to his personal views, and to those of Mrs. Adams and yourself, respecting his making a visit home, whenever desired, the utmost facility will be given in the power of the government. . . .

JAMES MONROE.

## JAMES MONROE TO JOHN ADAMS

WASHINGTON, April 19, 1813.

DEAR SIR:

The arrangement for the negotiations at St. Petersburg being completed, I have the pleasure to apprize you of it, as there will still be time to enable you to write to your son by the vessel which takes his colleagues there. The occasion was thought to be of that high importance to require according to the usage of our government a special mission of three. Mr. Gallatin and Mr. Bayard are the other two. Two commissions are prepared for treating with Great Britain, one for peace, under the mediation

of Russia; the other for commerce. In these the order is Mr. Gallatin, your son and Mr. Bayard. Another commission is given them to form a treaty of commerce with Russia, at the head of which your son is placed. The commissioners to treat with England, contemplating negotiations which might be carried on at Stockholm or elsewhere, as well as at St. Petersburg, and Mr. Gallatin being a member of the administration, it was thought correct to give him the priority. The same reason did not apply to a negotiation with Russia, where your son was already accredited. They are all envoys extraordinary and plenipotentiary. They are also all allowed an outfit, upon the principle, that they must be presented in a distinguished manner to the court, and be drawn much into society of the first rank and greatest expense. In truth my own sad experience has proved, that if we allow our ministers abroad all that the law permits in every case, we shall not put them at their ease there, and certainly not recompense them for their services and suffering. . . . JAMES MONROE.

## TO JOHN ADAMS

ST. PETERSBURG, 19 April, 1813.

DEAR SIR:

I intended in my last letter to have mentioned to you the circumstances which procured me somewhat unexpectedly the pleasure of an acquaintance with Sir Francis d'Ivernois, when the more singular incident which introduced me to that of Madame de Staël crossed my purpose and engrossed the letter to itself. I now return to Sir Francis.

Lord Cathcart on his arrival here sent me the usual card of notice from ambassador to ministers of the second order, informing me that he had presented to the Emperor his credentials as Ambassador Extraordinary from his Britannic Majesty. This was a *politeness* which I had not

and which I made no hesitation to return by paying him a formal visit of etiquette in person. I had already met him, as I told you, before at Madame de Staël's. He received me with all proper courtesy and expressed his hopes that our war would be stopped at the threshold—hopes in which I warmly and sincerely concurred, but which by the will of Heaven have been disappointed. He professed a great regard for America, and alluded to his particular and personal motives for attachment to that country of which I understood his lady is a native. He returned my visit, but it happened to be at a moment when my child was at the last extremity, and I could not receive him. Since then, and until he left the city to join the Emperor Alexander at his headquarters, I did not repeat my visit, and only occasionally saw him in the other places, when we talked on such topics as Swift says he and Harley were used to discuss on the road to Windsor.

Sir Francis d'Ivernois was not formally connected with the embassy. He was engaged upon a mission of his own, and I presume was collecting materials for a new pamphlet against Napoleon. On his first arrival he sent me his card and I sent him mine. Some time afterwards I heard he had expressed a desire to make my acquaintance having, as he said, had the pleasure of yours when you were in England. A common friend invited me to dine with him for the particular purpose of bringing us to meet, but Sir Francis was seized with a fever, which confined him to his apartments on the day of the dinner, and I thus missed the opportunity.

Some months afterwards, on occasion of a Te Deum at Court, I met him there and he was introduced to me. He immediately mentioned to me his ancient acquaintance with you, and added that he had at a later period been in correspondence with you. One thing which appeared to have

left an impression upon his mind, more lasting than from so slight an incident might have been expected, was that in your defence of the American Constitutions you had styled him *Doctor* d'Ivernois. He told me that he believed Doctor Price had been the occasion of the mistake. That he remembered having once dined with you at his house, and that Doctor Price had several times at table spoken to him as Doctor d'Ivernois, a title to which he had no pretension. Sir Francis, having since that time received the honor of knighthood from his Britannic Majesty, appears not to consider the Doctorate as a title of honor. Shenstone's schoolmistress challenged and held right dear the additions of "Goody, good woman, gossip ne Aunt and Dame". But that was because

> No flattery did corrupt her truth
> No *pompous* title did debauch her ear.

Sir Francis told me that he was on the point of departure; that he was going to make a tour through Silesia, and if the Russian armies should open the passage for him, into Switzerland. He said he had heard of some letters of mine concerning Silesia, and asked me if I knew where he could procure them. I had picked up here one copy of the French translation of them which I sent Sir Francis requesting his acceptance of it, observing in the note that, *though a Republican*, I was happy to have a sort of hereditary title to his friendship. He paid me a visit a day or two afterwards, and in return for my present gave me two publications of his own—one called Les trois offrandes à Bonaparte, and the other Napoléon Administrateur et Financier—but he seemed to have taken my calling myself a Republican something as he had felt your styling him a doctor. He said with a good natured smile that by the expression *though a Republi-*

*can* as applied to myself there was a lurking *epigram* upon him as being no longer a Republican. I assured him that there was nothing epigrammatic at all in my intention, nothing but an *antithesis between* my own Republicanism and my hereditary claim to his good graces. He replied that as a *Genevan* he had been a Republican also, and if Geneva still existed as a Republic, he should be so still. But as an Englishman, which he must now consider himself, he was not a Republican, nor could with propriety be so, to which I very readily assented. We had then a long and not unanimated conversation upon politics, upon the state of affairs between United States and Great Britain, in which I immediately perceived, what I had no reason to doubt of before, that we agreed only in one point, in most profoundly lamenting the war. With regard to its causes we totally differed upon the facts, and with regard to its consequences upon the speculations. He thought the war would be short, and that *we* should come to the British terms. He thought we should have done more wisely to join in the war against France and taken care to be *in at the death of Napoleon. Longe alia mihi est mens.* I had no passion for Napoleon hunting and told him, as I had told Madame de Staël, that I thought he had hunters enough at his heels already. I had no ambition to see him receive the *coup de pied de l'ane* from America.

Sir Francis was very strenuous in the persuasion that the present ministry were reluctant at this war with America. He had heard of the assertion made by Sir Robert Wilson at a gentleman's table in this city, which I have mentioned to you in a former letter. Sir Francis told me that he did not believe that Mr. Perceval had ever said anything like it to Sir Robert Wilson: that Sir Robert was by no means one of Mr. Perceval's intimate friends as he himself had been.

That he knew Mr. Perceval's sentiments as he knew his own. That Mr. Perceval had not been three minutes from him when he fell into the hands of Bellingham. That Mr. Perceval would have adhered to the Orders in Council, though at the cost of a war with America. But he neither desired, intended, nor expected that war, and would very sincerely have lamented it. I mention this circumstance in candor, because it goes at least some way to invalidate the testimony of Sir R. Wilson which was, as reported to me, expressed in very strong terms. Mr. Whitbread however very directly charged Mr. Perceval in open Parliament with the intention of going to war with America, and *there* Mr. Perceval did not disclaim it. I mentioned this to Sir Francis, but he thought an imputation from the opposition was no proof of a minister's intention, though he might see fit to leave it uncontradicted.

Sir Francis left the city before I had an opportunity of returning his visit. There is every prospect that he will have the means of pursuing his journey into Switzerland without molestation.

Madame de Staël is at Stockholm and has become an important political personage there, in high favor with the Crown Prince, whose chivalresque virtues she has been celebrating in a pamphlet against the continental system and the doctrine that free ships make free goods. She expatiates on the advantage which the acquisition of Norway would be to Sweden, because she says "ce n'est le tout de s'aggrandir, il vaut mieux savoir s'arrondir." An axiom well suited to the conception of a lady-politician. I am, etc.

## TO JOHN SPEYER

ST. PETERSBURG, 20 April, 1813.

SIR:

I have received your favor of 30th March, and the slips from the *Times* inclosed in it containing the news from America. I lament sincerely the differences which you mention to have arisen between Mr. T. Barlow and Mr. Warden,[1] nor can I easily imagine what occasion there could be for them. Still less am I qualified, without more information of the facts to express, or even to form, a decisive opinion upon the merits of the respective claims and allegations of the two gentlemen. I suppose the seal, cypher, and archives of the legation properly to remain in the custody of Mr. Barlow; but as he has no authority even from his uncle to act as chargé d'affaires, I do not see that the French government could recognize him in that capacity. It appears equally clear that Mr. Warden can have no authority to exercise any other functions than those of the consular office. The acknowledgment of the French government can only be coextensive with the powers given him by his own. It can confer no new authority upon him. It can neither make him a minister nor a chargé d'affaires. I believe Mr. Pinkney to be right in sending to Mr. Barlow the letters that he may receive for the legation. Whether Mr. Barlow will be authorized to open them I know not, and I must be

them will be justified in taking such measures concerning the public interests as necessity may impose and as their particular situations will admit. For this purpose the only essential point between them was harmony, and I grieve to learn that this is precisely the point that has failed.

I suppose the important events occurring in Germany will be known at Stockholm sooner than here. On the other hand it is probable that the intercourse between this country and England by the mails will henceforth no longer be through Sweden. The regular posts between this city and Hamburg are already restored. I am, etc.

## COMMISSION FOR TREATY OF COMMERCE

By JAMES MADISON,—President of the United States of America,

To all whom these presents shall concern: GREETING.

KNOW YE, That for the purpose of confirming and improving the amicable and beneficial relations between the United States and His Imperial Majesty the Emperor of all the Russias, and reposing special Trust and confidence in the Integrity, Prudence and Ability of JOHN Q. ADAMS, Minister Plenipotentiary of the United States at the Court of His said Imperial Majesty, of ALBERT GALLATIN, Secretary of the Treasury of the United States, and of JAMES A. BAYARD, a Senator of the United States, I have appointed them jointly and severally ENVOYS EXTRAORDINARY and MINISTERS PLENIPOTENTIARY of the United States of America to the Court of His said Imperial Majesty; with full and all manner of power and authority, for and in the name of the United States to meet and confer with a Minister or Ministers of His said Imperial Majesty, being furnished with the like power and authority, and with him or them to agree, treat, consult and negotiate of and concerning the general commerce between the United States and Russia, and of all matters and subjects connected therewith, which may be interesting to the two nations; and to conclud

sign a Treaty or Treaties, Convention or Conventions, touching the premises; transmitting the same to the President of the United States for his ratification, by and with the advice and consent of the Senate of the United States.

IN TESTIMONY WHEREOF, I have caused the seal of the United States to be hereunto affixed.

GIVEN under my hand at the City of Washington the Twenty Second day of April in the year of our Lord one thousand Eight hundred and Thirteen, and of the Independence of the United States the Thirty Seventh.

JAMES MADISON.

By the President,

JAS. MONROE, *Secretary of State.*

## JAMES MONROE TO JOHN QUINCY ADAMS

DEPARTMENT OF STATE, April 26th, 1813.

SIR:

I have had the honor to receive your letter of the 17th October last, with the regular series which preceded.

The offer by the Emperor of Russia of his mediation with England, communicated in your last letters, received at the close of the session of Congress, and confirmed by Mr. Daschkoff at the same time, was immediately accepted by the President, and the measures necessary to give it effect adopted without delay.[1] Mr. Gallatin and Mr. Bayard have been associated with you, in a joint commission, to negotiate and conclude a treaty of peace with Great Britain; and in two other Commissions to accomplish objects for which the occasion was deemed favorable, that of one being to form a treaty of commerce with Great Britain, and of the other, a treaty of commerce with Russia. Instructions for these several objects are prepared, and it is expected that these gentlemen will sail in less than a week from this date from Phila-

[1] See *Life and Correspondence of Rufus King*, V. 318, 338.

delphia in a vessel which will be protected by passports from Mr. Daschkoff, and the British admiral in the Chesapeake. Mr. Harris is appointed secretary of the mission.

The President has been induced thus to give effect to the mediation of Russia, so far as depended on him, without waiting for the decision of the British government, from a sincere desire to avail himself of every fair opportunity to conclude peace on just and reasonable conditions; to manifest his respect for the Emperor personally, and to avoid any delay which might otherwise result from our distance from the theatre of the proposed negotiations. You will be able to do justice to the motives of the President in this transaction, by giving the proper explanations where they may be requisite. He is sensible that this proceeding may not be strictly regular, and in case Great Britain should decline the mediation, that it may be exposed to the appearance of having been premature; but he has thought it better to waive every punctilious consideration rather than be accessory to a delay, which, if the result of the mediation should correspond with the friendly views of the Emperor of Russia, would be a subject of regret to all parties.

I am instructed by the President to communicate to you his approbation of your conduct in the mission to Russia, and to state particularly, that he has derived much useful information from your correspondence, and seen with great interest the good effect of the judgment, with which you managed our concerns, and conciliated the favorable disposition of that power towards the United States. He is very desirous that you should act in the negotiations in which Mr. Gallatin and Mr. Bayard are associated with you; having full confidence, from your experience and knowledge of the subjects on which you will have to treat, that the public would derive material advantage from your services. . . .

The President having it in contemplation to avail the public of your services in England, should peace take place, and you be disposed to accept the mission, has instructed me to apprize you of it, that you may take the same into consideration, and make

such arrangements as may be best adapted to such an event. Should a treaty be formed, it must be ratified by both governments before they could interchange ministers. You can yourself sufficiently calculate the extent of this period. At whatever time you may leave Russia Mr. Harris may be charged with the affairs of the United States until further provision is made. I have the honor to be, etc. JAS. MONROE.

## TO R. G. BEASLEY

ST. PETERSBURG, 29 April, 1813.

SIR:

Since I had the pleasure of last writing you, which was on the 28th of February, I have received your favor of 23 March. As the intercourse with England will henceforth be open by the way of Hamburg I shall perhaps often avail myself of your obliging permission to enclose letters to you to be forwarded to the United States, offering you my thanks for your attention to those sent by Mr. Lawler and for your very kind offers of service.

I took the liberty in my last letter to give you freely my own individual opinion upon the subject of impressment. You observe that you think the law professed in America for the exclusion of foreign seamen goes too far.[1] If all our countrymen thought and felt as I do on the question, I should not only say that this law goes too far, but that any compliance whatever on our part would do the same. Setting aside the physical force which the British so loudly and unfortunately so truly boast of having to maintain their injustice, and I doubt whether the annals of mankind can exhibit an instance of a practice in its own nature so outrageous

[1] Act of March 3, 1813.

advanced by a nation as a claim of right. Impressment, wherever practised, is neither more nor less than the crime of *manstealing*. By the universal law of Europe if the officers of one sovereign are caught levying men within the jurisdiction of another, he is hung like a common highway robber. If the same rule has not been long settled for the same act done at sea, it is because until this practice was commenced against *us* and against *us alone* by the British, the thing was unexampled among civilized nations. The fault of the American government, a fault which nothing but the excessive disproportion of naval force between us and our adversary can excuse to the American nation, has all along been of complying too much with the absurd and iniquitous pretensions of the British on this point.

This is the opinion with which I shall live and die. If all the people of America, therefore, were of my sentiment, the last drop of American blood and the last dollar of American property should be staked, rather than flinch an hair's breadth from our whole ground in this quarrel. It is pure unmingled tyranny that constitutes the whole British claim, and we cannot allow the minutest particle of it without becoming accessary to it. A law to *exclude* British mariners from our naval service, public or private, must carry marks of injustice and illiberality; viewed in reference to the persons who would be thus excluded, it is a species of interdict neither generous, humane nor just. I am sure if our posterity shall possess any sense of national self respect, they will ask why their fathers sullied their statute book with such a sort of *outlawry* against a class of useful and meritorious foreigners, whose only offence from the nature of the thing must consist in their partiality for our service? The only apology that can be made for us in answer to this question will be, that it was a sacrifice to Moloch—that the British nation,

with at least a force one hundred times greater than ours on the ocean, was waging a bloody and merciless war against us, for the pretended right of stealing their subjects from our ships on the high seas. That in order to prevail upon them merely to forbear stealing our own native citizens under the pretense of taking theirs, we submitted to the degradation of refusing to all foreign mariners the common rights of national hospitality; that like hunted civet cats we tore off with our own teeth the parts for which we were hunted, and flung them from us to satiate the fury or to slacken the pursuit of our hunters. How far this plan will serve for our justification I shall not undertake to say.[1] Bitterly do I be-

[1] Monroe on the subject of impressment in the negotiations under the Emperor's mediation, gave it as his candid opinion that "if we do not secure, in a clear and distinct manner, the forbearance of the British practice, in consideration of the exclusion of British seamen from our service, that it were infinitely better that nothing should be done." No arrangement by understanding would suffice. "It would be deplorable indeed if we did all we could and received in return nothing but the informal promise of the British commissioners or government to do what it is otherwise their duty to do. I believe such an arrangement would not only ruin the present Administration, but the Republican party, and even the cause." *Monroe to Gallatin*, May 6, 1813. *Writings of James Monroe*, V. 256.

"I have conversed with Mr. Bayard on the subject of the instructions, which he had not received till yesterday. He expressed his apprehensions that we would fail, and his regret that we had not more discretion on the subject of impressments. He appeared desirous that we had been permitted to have on that subject an informal understanding with Great Britain, which he thought would have been as efficient in practice as a solemn article, and by saving the pride of Great Britain could not have failed to insure success." *Gallatin to Monroe*, May 2, 1813, in *Writings of Gallatin*, I. 540. "As the contemplated arrangements on the subject of impressment will be reciprocal in form; as what Great Britain may deem a concession will be balanced by a concession on the part of the United States; as the question of right can be put out of view in stipulating a course of practice; and as the stipulation will be in a treaty limited for a fixed term of years, it is not presumable that any motive or scruple, much less any serious difficulty, will be opposed to an article in the usual form providing for the subject. The President, being desirous that no unessential consideration should embarrass your negotiation or endanger its result, intends that in providing against the practice of impressment

wail that while the whole ruling part of the British nation is united against us in as iniquitous a cause as ever stained the infamous record of human wars, we are divided and distracted in a cause as righteous as ever was sealed with the blood of martyrdom. Our weakness and our divisions may excuse compliances objectionable in themselves, but indispensable to obtain the blessing of peace.

From the disposition which you say prevails at present among the English to chastise our temerity it is not probable that even our compliances will attain their object. The disposition to chastise us has been the constant spirit of English *power* from the time that James the first chastised the founder of Virginia, Sir Walter Ralegh, and the puritan founders of New England down to this hour. Charles the first chastised Pym, Hampden, and Oliver Cromwell, by an *Order in Council* when they were embarked to go to America, prohibiting their departure and forcing them to remain in England. The Rump Parliament, St. John, and Cromwell chastised the American colonies by the invention of the Navigation Act. And so delightsome was this mode of chastisement to the English spirit that Charles the Second after the Restoration adopted the witty device of the Rump, which laid the just foundation of American Independence, and which has been ever since one of the darlings of the English nation. George Grenville, "the stupendous calculator," chastised us with the stamp act, and how we were chastised

from American vessels you should exercise an entire discretion as to the mode and shape of the provision, taking care only that it be such as by fair construction will bind the faith of the British government to an effective discontinuance of the practice in question. This practice being essentially a cause of war, and the primary object of your negotiation, a treaty of peace, leaving it in silence and trusting to a mere understanding liable to doubts and different explanations, would not be that security which the United States have a right to expect." *Monroe to Gallatin*, May 5, 1813. *Ib.*, 540.

by the Lords North, and Sandwich, and Stormont, and the Generals Burgoyne, Clinton, and Cornwallis, is known to all mankind. If Lord Castlereagh goes out and Mr. Canning comes in, as you anticipate, we shall have the chastising spirit in all its *vigor*. Mr. Canning wishes to chastise us out of mere humanity, precisely as Catherine of Medicis chastised the Protestants at the St. Bartholomew. It is strange to observe, as the proverb says, how "great wits jump together," and how exactly similar the humanity of Mr. Canning is to the humanity of that famous Princess. In the recurrence of memory to times past I have the consolation to remark that in spite of all these chastisements we have lived, and thrived, and prospered, until we get beyond the reach of chastisers and disarmed their *humanity*. I trust in God we shall do so again.

The family quarrel and the Catholic question may serve to amuse the leisure moments of the public. With regard to the first the parties have made an appeal to the public and therefore the public are authorized to form and express an opinion in the case. The question is between high treason and subornation of perjury—peccadillos which are apt to catch small offenders in the cobweb of the law but which in this instance will not even forfeit character. The Catholics will undoubtedly gain their cause. The existence of the nation, or of the constitution, or of the church indeed, depends upon the perpetuation of their disabilities, just as it did upon the Orders in Council, just as it does upon impressment. Nevertheless the disabilities will be removed and who would have thought it? the nation and the constitution and the church will go on as before.

You have now the news from Germany sooner than we have it here. How formidable the French army in the north will be next summer I hardly know, but I believe more

formidable armies will be brought against them. France will not be suffered to rise from the blow which has thrown her prostrate; the second stroke is ready to receive her as she makes the attempt, and it will probably prepare her to receive the law and the lawgiver from the hands of her enemies. Such at least is the undoubting opinion here and the symptoms of the times give it much countenance.

I am etc.

## TO ABIGAIL ADAMS

St. Petersburg, 1 May, 1813.

Every day that passes gives me occasion more and more to lament this unfortunate war with which it has pleased heaven to visit us. If it could have been avoided, we should now have had a free commercial intercourse with all the north of Europe, at least to Bremen inclusively, and in a few months more with Holland. Besides the advantages which our country would have derived from this I should have had continual opportunities of hearing from my dear friends in America, and of writing to them; and what would have been yet more agreeable to me had our peace been preserved, there would have been no other than the natural obstacles to prevent my return to them and to my country. As it is, the only means I have of communicating with America is by the way of England. How precarious that is you can easily judge, for it depends upon the forbearance of the British government to stop individual travellers who go to England, there to embark for America in cartels. Of these there has been a succession at short intervals through the winter, by everyone of whom I have written to you. I now write by an American who is going to Hamburg and thence

to England. I inclose the letter as I have done once or twice before to *R. G. Beasley, Esqr., agent for American prisoners of war, London.* If it should be our destiny to remain here another winter I would recommend it to you to inclose letters for us under cover to him, and to send them by the cartels. He informs me that by the regulations all the letters sent by the cartels must be open, *except his.* So that by transmitting them under cover to him they will be less exposed to perusal on their way.

I say if it should be my destiny to remain here another winter, because I have got no orders from our government that indicate what we are to expect. This uncertainty cannot however much longer continue. I have already learnt from English newspapers the arrival at New York of the *Freeling* cartel in which Mr. Harris was a passenger. Whatever the President may determine concerning the dispatches of which he was the bearer, it will at least be decisive with regard to our prospects for the present year. That we should stay here is the least probable as well as the least desirable of the alternatives that I can anticipate. After an experience of four successive Russian winters, I believe there is no person accustomed to milder climates who would not be desirous of an opportunity to assure himself once more that in the changes of the seasons there is such a thing as summer. We have formed no social attachments that can make us much regret the country, and I have no employment here which can even afford me the consolation of being useful to my own.

On the continent of Europe the year upon which we have entered promises to be as eventful and threatens to be as sanguinary as its last predecessor. But the scene of action and the cause are totally changed. The dream of universal monarchy in France, which may have tickled the imagination

of the Corsican, and which has so hideously haunted the fancies of his enemies, is forever past. France will not soon again appear in the character of an invader. She is herself invaded. The Hanseatic cities are already lost. Holland in a few months, perhaps in a few weeks, will share the same fate. Prussia from the most subservient of her allies has become the most exasperated of her enemies. Denmark has deserted her and is before this numbered with her foes. Austria will in all probability very soon join the same side. A Swedish, Russian, and British force, commanded by a French general, is destined to recover Hanover and to restore Holland to the House of Orange; while at the same time Louis 18 has issued a declaration claiming anew the throne of France as his inheritance. To oppose all this Napoleon has little but the resources of a genius great only by success, and the remnants of a shattered military reputation. It is rumored that he is collecting a large army upon the Rhine; but his troops will be mostly raw and inexperienced and all of them disheartened. His present disasters are so entirely imputable to himself that it can scarcely be said fortune has abandoned him. There is so little in his personal character that can take hold of the affections of mankind, that his destruction, which is as certain as any human event that can be foretold, will leave no sympathizing feelings behind. But what will be the fortunes of France it is not so easy to foresee. If she takes back the Bourbons, she must take them from the hands of her enemies; and with the Bourbons she must take conditions the most humiliating to her pride, and at the price of sacrifices the most fatal to her course. This is a point of view by no means grateful to contemplation, but which cannot be overlooked. Louis 18 in his declaration has promised to abolish the laws of conscription—a promise certainly well suited to the purposes of England, but which,

if accomplished, will make the Bourbons themselves when restored the mere puppets of foreign powers and France alternately a prey to all her neighbors.

The reflection of the present state of things upon our own concerns is not auspicious. In the spring tide of success which has flowed with such an impetuous torrent in favor of the English almost from the moment of our declaration of war, they have been gathering spirit and inveteracy and unanimity, so that now the language of all their parties is that we must be *chastised* into submission. The loss of three frigates and of more than five hundred merchant vessels in six months has only stimulated them to revenge, and our shameful failures in Canada have made them perfectly secure in the only quarter where they could have any reason to fear us. They have blockaded all our ports from the Mississippi to New York inclusively, and the rest I suppose will soon follow. I hope our country will prove herself equal to the trial that awaits her. Peace is not to be expected.

. . . . . .

## TO ABIGAIL ADAMS

St. Petersburg, 5 June, 1813.

. . . . . .

You have observed in several of your letters that many things have been occurring in our country which I ought to know, but which could not with prudence be communicated to me. Of public affairs I know scarcely anything but what the editors of the London newspapers think proper to extract from those they receive from America. The New England votes at the Presidential election (Vermont excepted)

have given me a sufficient indication of the temper prevailing in that part of the country. The federalists in abandoning the standard of their former candidates, Pinckney and King, and ranging themselves under the banners of Mr. Clinton, have at least shown that they are not chargeable with undue attachment to *men*.[1] Measures and not men has been sometimes a favorite maxim among Republicans. By accepting Mr. Clinton for their leader the federalists have illustrated their principles more unequivocally than in any of their earlier proceedings. But the objects of party controversy are so perpetually changing in America that consistency is no more to be expected in adherence to men than to measures. As the rallying word of this new party is *peace*, an object so desirable in itself, and so congenial to the spirit of the people in America that have a fair prospect of rising in popularity. Mr. Clinton has very recently declared himself as explicitly and in as strong terms as could be desired on the subject of the *Union*. This has for the last nine or ten years been the livid spot of New England federalism. I have not heard of anything on his part that indicated or implied any dereliction of his principles. I hope therefore that he will never countenance the project of separation. We have nothing else to dread.

The exploits of our heroes upon the ocean have not only saved our national character from sinking in the eyes of Europe, but have exerted universal astonishment on this continent and a perfect frenzy of resentment in England. Our disasters by land would have made us the scorn and derision of mankind, if the naval victories had not redeemed our fame. Hitherto we have rather gained than lost in the estimation of the world by those vicissitudes of war; but

[1] De Witt Clinton and Jared Ingersoll were the Federalist candidates against James Madison and Elbridge Gerry.

upon the water the contest is too unequal. The day of misfortunes must come, and if we continue the burlesque upon war which we have so often been exhibiting before Canada, our consideration will be irretrievably lost. Every allowance is made for our ignorance and inexperience, but these excuses cannot always be admitted. The year of novitiate is nearly past, and if we are ever to form soldiers, it is time to show it by some other token than surprises and surrenders. It is there after all that we can alone expect ever to make any impression upon our enemy. Our frigate warfare must be nearly if not quite at an end. Our privateering has had its harvest. If we can build and equip line of battle ships and frigates in numbers sufficient to form a squadron, we may give our Lady Macbeth mother a new demonstration of the legitimacy of our descent from herself; but years must pass before this will be practicable, and in the meantime she will fill the blank of our history with fire and blood, and, what is worse than both, with shame, unless we show her other generals and other warriors than we have yet sent to bluster with proclamations and capitulate to half their numbers.

The events of the last year in the north of Europe have materially changed the face of the world, and have probably produced a great approximation towards a European peace, though its symptoms are yet scarcely perceptible. The last military season began by presenting the aspect of France with all Germany and Italy invading Russia. The season has commenced by showing Russia with almost all Germany, Sweden, Denmark, and England, invading France. France to the astonishment of the world, and I confess to mine, has risen like Antaeus from her fall. Napoleon instead of sinking under his calamities has already returned to the field, less powerful but perhaps not less formidable than be-

fore. The first effect of his appearance was a battle [1] which his adversaries have determined as a victory, for it was celebrated here by the usual appendage of triumph, a Te Deum. But after this victory they retreated. The storm that has been haltring over his head is at this moment bursting upon him in all its fury, and the chances are of excessive odds that he will perish in it. The fate of France is involved in that of his person. There appears scarcely a possibility that he should escape the forces that are now brought to bear against him; if he should, he will be entitled beyond all controversy to the title of a great man. He had never before stood the trial of adversity, but it has now come with a severity proportioned to the greatness of his fortune.

Another favorite of the fickle Goddess has been just called in the midst of a triumphant march to pay the debt of nature. The commander in chief of the Russian armies, Prince Kutuzoff Smolensky died on the 28th of April, four days before the battle of Lützen. He was appointed to the command in August last, while Napoleon was in the midst of his victorious march to Moscow. He did not succeed in saving the metropolis; but as the misfortunes of the French Emperor commenced immediately afterwards, the Russian Field Marshal has had the honors of victory over him, indebted for them more to famine and frost than to any very signal display of genius or of skill. He died at Bunzlau in Silesia, and his remains have been transmitted to this place. While his body lay there in the coffin and exposed to public view a lady took an opportunity to slip a crown of laurel round his brow. A silent tribute to his fame, but for delicacy of sentiment and pathos of expression worth an hundred volumes of personal eulogy. The Emperor Alexander, also, in

[1] Of Gross-Görschen, (more usually known as the battle of Lützen), fought May 3.

a letter to the Prince's widow, has done honor to his General and to himself. I am etc.

## TO JOHN SPEYER

ST. PETERSBURG, 24 June, 1813.

SIR:

. . . . . .

I expect hourly the arrival of Messrs. Gallatin and Bayard, but I believe the opinion given by you Mr. Hanztow will be verified. The English ministerial papers show that the ministry were never so remote from all ideas of peace as at this time, and there never was a time when they were so little molested by opposition. The nation as well as the government are in a state of what Cobbett calls *exacerbation.* It is not yet clear that their magnificent plans of restorations and counter-revolutions in Germany, Holland, and France, will fail. Monsieur and the Duke d'Angoulême, and the Prince of Orange, a general in the Austrian service, and the Duke of Cumberland, may have resources and expedients for final success which have not yet been brought into operation. The system has not had time to unfold itself in all its grandeur, still less can the partial events of a few weeks lead sanguine tempers to despair of its ultimate success. Paper money and Mr. Pitt's sinking fund give facilities of great liberality from the public coffers; and if England will but bleed her purse freely, she may still bleed the continent *for the liberties of mankind* for aught I know four or five years longer. While the exacerbation lasts we must not soothe ourselves with hopes of peace. If England can make her own terms of peace in Europe, she will not be willing to take

terms of peace from America. She cannot at present expect to dictate them to us.

. . . . . .

## TO THE SECRETARY OF STATE

No. 113. [JAMES MONROE]

ST. PETERSBURG, 26 June, 1813.

SIR:

. . . . . .

A few days after I received from a friend the *National Intelligencer* of 15 April, containing an editorial paragraph concerning the appointment of those gentlemen,[1] which I communicated to the Count on the 22d. I observed to him that however the British government might think proper to act on this occasion, that of the United States would at least have manifested in a signal manner at once its earnest and constant desire for a just and honorable peace, and its sense of the motives which had induced the Emperor's offer. That the President could not have adopted a measure better adapted to do honor to His Majesty's proposal, than by the appointment of two persons among the most distinguished of our citizens to coöperate on the part of the United States in accomplishing the Emperor's friendly and benevolent purpose, and that if it should eventually fail of being successful, at least the true and only source of its failure would be known.[2]

The Count said he was persuaded the Emperor would view

[1] Gallatin and Bayard.

[2] See Madison's special message to Congress, May 25, 1813, in *Writings of Madison* (Hunt), VIII. 244.

in the same light the proceeding of the American government, and he regretted very sincerely that there appeared a reluctance in the British government to accept the Emperor's offer. That he had received since he saw me last dispatches from Count Lieven. That the British minister in terms of much politeness had intimated to him that there was no sovereign whose mediation they should more readily accept than that of the Emperor, but that their differences with the United States were of a nature involving the *principles of the internal government of the British nation*, and which it was thought were not susceptible of being committed to the discussion of any mediation.[1] The Count added that it would remain to be considered whether after this, and after the solemn step taken by the government of the United States, it would be advisable to renew the offer to the British ministry, and give them an opportunity for a reconsideration. It was possible that further reflection might lead to a different resolution; and he should submit the question to the Emperor's determination. Different circumstances furnished other materials for deliberations, and we have, said the Count, in our own affairs an example of a sudden and unexpected turn of occurrences and prospects. He alluded to the armistice concluded between the Emperor of Russia and King of Prussia on one part, and the Emperor Napoleon on the other, on the 5th of this month, and which is to continue until the 20th of July. [2]

This event, sudden and unexpected indeed, does not appear to me calculated to make the British government more ready to accept the Emperor's mediation for a pacific negotiation with the United States. Its tendency, so far as it leads to the prospect of a continental peace, is rather to im-

[1] See *Alexander Baring to Gallatin*, July 22, 1813, in *Writings of Gallatin*, I. 546.

[2] The armistice of Plăswitz, agreed to June 4, after the battle of Bautzen.

pair the harmony between Britain and Russia herself. It has occasioned here so much astonishment that the very motive for it is yet problematical.

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## TO THE SECRETARY OF STATE

No. 114. [JAMES MONROE]

ST. PETERSBURG, 14 July, 1813.

SIR:

On the 2nd instant Mr. Pflug arrived here by land from Gothenburg with dispatches from Mr. Daschkoff to this government.[1] He brought me a letter from Messieurs Gallatin and Bayard, dated 21 June, Gothenburg Roads, informing me of their appointment together with me by the President as envoys extraordinary and ministers plenipotentiary to negotiate a peace with Great Britain under the mediation of the Emperor of Russia, of their progress thus far, and of their intention to proceed as speedily as possible to St. Petersburg. Mr. Pflug tells me that they were to sail from Gothenburg the same day that he left it and that their letter to me was dated. I have been from this arrival in hourly expectation of theirs.

I must solicit the favor of you, sir, to make my warm and sincere acknowledgments acceptable to the President for the honor done me by this new appointment, to which I am the

[1] "It appeared to me improper to give Mr. Pflug any American character or appearance; concealment of his being employed to carry the Russian despatches being, as I thought, forbidden by the law of nations." *Gallatin to Monroe*, May 8, 1813. *Writings of Gallatin*, I. 545.

more sensible from the highly respectable and distinguished characters of the gentlemen with whom he was pleased to connect me in the mission. I have only to add the most ardent wish that its result may prove satisfactory to him and propitious to our country.[1]

Since I had the honor of writing you last none of the information from England has tended to encourage the belief that on further consideration they will ultimately accept the mediation of the Emperor. On the contrary, my own information from private sources, and that of all the American and English here from their correspondents, concurs to show that the British government have been both surprised and mortified by the Emperor's offer of mediation. The pretension upon which alone they now continue the war is so far from being as they have asserted, an ancient right, that they never did dare and dare not now advance it against any one European Power. It has been so uniformly and invariably the policy of the United States to keep themselves aloof from all the political combinations of Europe, that the British government seems to have taken it for granted that their controversies with us might always be managed upon principles not applicable to their intercourse with other powers, and that what they might be compelled to submit to as law of nations with the rest of Europe, they might break through with impunity in their relations with America. They do not appear at all to have foreseen that their most powerful and closest European allies would ever take any concern in a contest upon the question of impressment, and as a motive for declining the Russian mediation they have alleged that it was a dispute involving principles of internal

[1] Five days after this letter was written the Senate rejected the nomination of Gallatin by a vote of eighteen to seventeen, but confirmed Adams and Bayard. See *Writings of Madison* (Hunt), VIII. 252.

administration, as if the United States were a mere appendage to the British dominions.

. . . . . .

## TO ABIGAIL ADAMS

St. Petersburg, 19 July, 1813.

Mr. Gallatin and Mr. Bayard reached Gothenburg Roads on the 20 June. A Russian gentleman, who had come as passenger in the same vessel with them and then proceeded by land to this place, brought me a letter from them dated 21 June, and arrived here eighteen days since. They wrote me that they intended to proceed as speedily as possible upon their voyage, that they had letters for me from my family as well as dispatches, which they kept in the expectation that they might arrive here as soon as the traveller by land. From that day to this an almost uninterrupted series of east winds has prevailed here in the Baltic and the North Sea, so that I am still waiting for their arrival.

I cannot say it is now entirely without impatience, as it is from the dispatches which they bring that I am to ascertain whether I have the prospect of returning to my country and friends this season, or am to be detained another winter in Russia.

The appointment of this new mission, and the solemnity given to it by the selection of the persons associated in it (I need not use with you the affectation of excepting the one who was already here), may come as an additional proof of the earnestness and sincerity with which the American government wishes for the restoration of peace, and of the readiness with which they avail themselves of every just and honorable expedient for obtaining it. The disposition of our

enemy appears to be very different. All the accounts from England lead to the belief that the British ministry will ultimately reject the mediation of Russia, and that this pacific overture will not be more successful than those which preceded it.

There are many circumstances which indicate a probability that an effort is now making to effect a general peace in Europe. In the course of the last winter after the tremendous catastrophe of the immense army that had invaded Russia, Austria offered her mediation to all the belligerent powers, and from having been an auxiliary to France assumed a neutral position. The mediation was immediately accepted by France. It was not positively rejected by the others, but was treated as subordinate to another negotiation to draw Austria into the new coalition against France. Whether Austria had really promised to join the coalition, or had only held out flattering hopes which the sanguine temper of the time had received as promises, certain it is that England, Russia, Prussia, and Sweden, did in the month of April expect with undoubting confidence the cooperation of Austria to dissolve the Confederation of the Rhine, to recover Hanover and Holland, and to circumscribe France within her ancient boundaries, if not even to restore the House of Bourbon. The battle of Lützen was claimed by both parties as a victory, and was here celebrated as such by a Te Deum. But in its consequences it was the most important victory ever won by Bonaparte, for it proved to all Europe that France was still able to cope with her enemies, and even to make head against them. A second battle three weeks after had a similar and more unequivocal result. Between the first and second battles Napoleon had proposed that a Congress should be assembled at Prague in Bohemia, to which all the powers at war, including the United

States of America, should be invited to send plenipotentiaries for the purpose of concluding a general peace, and he offered to stipulate an armistice during the negotiation. After the second battle Russia and Prussia, with the concurrence of Austria, accepted the proposition for an armistice, limited however to the term of six weeks, probably with a view to receive the answer from England whether she should choose to be represented at the congress or not. This armistice is on the point of expiring, but it is said to have been prolonged for six weeks more. In the meantime Napoleon has quartered his army upon the territory of his enemy in Silesia, is levying a contribution upon Hamburg of about ten millions of dollars, is doubly fortifying all his positions upon the Elbe, and receiving continual reinforcements to be prepared for renewing an offensive campaign. He has made sure of the aid and support of Denmark and Saxony, and strongly confirmed Austria in her propensities to neutrality. If the war should be renewed, his prospects, though infinitely below those with which he invaded Russia last summer, will be far above those with which he entered upon the present campaign in April. If the Congress should meet, he will not have it in his power to give the law to Europe; but the peace must be the effect of reciprocal and important concessions.

There has nothing occurred since the commencement of the French Revolution which has occasioned such astonishment throughout Europe as this state of things. There are many examples in history of the extraordinary defeat and annihilation of immensely powerful armies. But the reappearance of a second overpowering host within five months after the dissolution of the first is, I believe, without a parallel. . . .

## TO THE SECRETARY OF STATE

No. 116. [JAMES MONROE]

ST. PETERSBURG, 9 August, 1813.

SIR:

. . . . . .

In renewing my warmest acknowledgments for the approbation which the President has been pleased to express of my conduct in the mission to this country, and for the further tokens of his confidence which he has seen fit on this occasion to bestow, as well as for those which he had contemplated in the event of a successful termination to the present extraordinary mission, I can only add my earnest desire to deserve the continuance of his good opinion, and my readiness to discharge to the best of my ability the duties of any station in which he may deem it expedient to require my coöperation in the public service. The prospects with regard to the issue of the extraordinary mission are not flattering. The late successes of the British in Spain and the renewal of the war in the north of Europe, now considered as certain, leave no probability that the British government will consent to treat under this mediation. The contingency therefore upon which the President had thought of assigning to me a new destination in Europe is not likely to occur. And having received no letter of recall from this post I propose to remain here until I shall be further honored with his commands. Whether it will be possible for my colleagues to return to the United States during the present season is yet uncertain, and must remain so until we shall have received answers to the communications we have made to this government. Circumstances may occur upon which I shall determine to

return with them, without waiting for a letter of recall or of leave to the Emperor. In comparing the instructions to the joint mission with those to myself particularly I have inferred that I may avail myself of this opportunity to return home without taking leave, if I think proper. But on the other hand being instructed to remain charged with the ordinary mission to this court, and thinking it probable that the situation of the north of Europe the ensuing winter will at all events be such as to render the presence of a person fully charged with the mission here expedient, I have concluded to stay unless some incident which I do not now anticipate should arise, changing the aspect of things and deciding me to return. In either case I shall pay due attention to the several objects recommended to my care in the separate instructions.

. . . . . .

## TO JOHN ADAMS

ST. PETERSBURG, 10 August, 1813.

. . . . . .

The mission upon which my colleagues have taken the trouble of coming to this country has the prospect of terminating like all the former efforts of the American government for the restoration of peace. I have this day a letter from a correspondent who says that, if *Justice* in person should offer her mediation between America and Britain, the British government would refuse it, and this is the most obvious and natural way of accounting for this aversion to the mediation of the Emperor Alexander. There is, I believe, no danger that the popularity of my colleagues will suffer, either by the imputation of having sacrificed essential rights, or of

having obstinately insisted upon untenable claims. Neither do I apprehend any danger of divisions, jealousies, or altercations between the commissioners. I thank you very sincerely for your seasonable hint on this subject. I hope and trust that we should all have been deeply penetrated with the importance of cordial harmony among ourselves, had we been placed in situations where diversities of opinion and of sentiment might have arisen. But we are not likely to be called upon for the exercise of the virtues of mutual concession or forbearance. According to all appearance we shall not have the opportunity even of treating. We have as yet no definitive answer, but the disinclination of the British Regent to *any* mediation of the quarrel with America has been manifested with so much notoriety, that I presume it is by this time as well known in America as here.

There has been in the middle of the summer an attempt to assemble a congress for a general pacification in Europe. The Emperor Napoleon has officially announced to the world that it was proposed by him, that the Congress should assemble at Prague. That there should be ministers from all the belligerent European powers and from the United States of America. He also asserted that Austria concurred entirely in these views. And he offered to stipulate for an armistice while the congress should be held. An armistice was actually concluded between him and the Emperor Alexander and King of Prussia. But it was only for six weeks, though it has since been continued three weeks longer, and terminates this day, with six days' notice before the renewal of hostilities. In the meantime a sort of preliminary congress of ministers from Austria, Russia, Prussia, and France, has been held at Prague to see if they could agree upon a *basis* for a general negotiation. But it is said Austria has been improving the same time to conclude an alliance offensive

and defensive against France with Russia, and that the allies have now five hundred thousand men ready for action upon the renewal of hostilities. The universal opinion here is that the war will recommence, if between France and Austria it has not already begun. The late English victory in Spain has contributed much to settle the wavering of Austria, which between her ostensible character of mediator, and her notorious propensities to join in the war, has exhibited a system of policy not altogether free from the imputation of duplicity.

It is scarcely possible that the campaign now about to commence should be long. Great events will follow in very rapid succession. If the forces allied against France should act in concert and with operations well combined, the Rhine may yet be the boundary for the ensuing winter. It will be difficult to pursue the system of defeating the French armies by always retreating before them, which has hitherto been practised since the commencement of the Russian war. Napoleon must be victorious again, or he must sink, and the fate of France is bound up in his fortune. Should he win one or two battles, I think the negotiation for a general peace will be resumed. Should he lose them, his career must close and France will be at the mercy of the coalition. I am, etc.

## TO BENJAMIN WATERHOUSE

ST. PETERSBURG, 11 August, 1813.

DEAR SIR:

. . . . . .

We have just now received very late accounts and newspapers from America brought by a vessel arrived at Gothenburg from New York, on board of which General Moreau came as a passenger. The General has not been here, but was to proceed immediately to the Emperor Alexander's headquarters, which are in Silesia. He will probably find ample occasion for the exercise of his talents.

The *Boston Patriot* of 24 April did not reach me with your letter. I do not recollect having seen a number of that paper since the one which contained the disclosures of Captain John Henry. From that time I have neither seen nor heard much of Boston politics, and what I have heard of them has not raised my opinion of the wisdom and virtue of those who lead them. Whenever the spirit of faction is substituted for the spirit of patriotism, a counterfeit for a genuine coin, it will always be attended by a multitude of other counterfeits of virtue.

The spirit of faction has ruled without control in Boston several years. It has now got possession of the state and almost all New England. Its natural and very consistent effort is to prostrate the nation at the feet of a foreign enemy, for the sake of obtaining a triumph over a rival party. It is one of the inconveniences and misfortunes to which all free governments, and especially all republics, are liable, and it is vain to quarrel with the condition of our nature. I lament the weakness which our internal divisions spread over the nation; but I trust that our cause will ultimately

prove successful, and that the day will come when no legislature or governor in the United States will inquire *how many victims* to the most degrading as well as the most oppressive foreign thraldom must be abandoned to the tyrants of the ocean, before their country shall assert her rights of independence and perform her duty of protecting them by war.

The governors of Massachusetts and Connecticut it seems refused to order out the quotas of militia of those states because they were not actually invaded. But they will probably not always have this reason, whether good or bad, for withholding the aid of their states from the general defence of their country. The British government has shown a disposition to tamper with this spirit of disaffection to the Union, and to deal more mercifully with the states which sympathize most with them. But I doubt whether this forbearance will be of long duration. The bitterness of their malice against the Yankees will prove too powerful for their insidious policy; their hatred will yet get the better of their cunning.

I have had for some weeks a strong hope that a negotiation for a general peace in Europe was about to take place, and that it would contribute to make our particular peace more easily attainable; but the course of events has altogether disappointed this hope. An armistice of nearly three months in the north of Europe, instead of leading to peace, is only a prelude to a blaze of war more universal over the face of Europe than ever. At this moment the storm is on the eve of bursting, and where its ravages will end is only known to him who stills the raging of the sea and calms the tumults of the people. In all the calamities of the times I dwell with confidence in this conclusion, that what he wills is for the best, and that whatever may be defective in the re-

tributive justice of this world events will be duly compensated in another. I remain etc.

## TO WILLIAM PLUMER

St. Petersburg, 13 August, 1813.

Dear Sir:

A year, a most eventful year in both hemispheres, is on the point of expiring since the date of your favor of 19 August, 1812, which was delivered to me very recently by our old brother Senator, Mr. Bayard, who has now become one of my colleagues in a mission extraordinary to Russia.

The object of this mission was the restoration of peace between the United States and Britain. In the month of September last, the Emperor of Russia, moved by his friendship for both those powers, and by the interest of his own nation which were suffering in consequence of the war that had arisen between them, conceived the idea of offering his mediation between them. I have every reason for supposing that this idea was the suggestion of his own mind and originated entirely with himself. I state this to you, because I have seen intimations in English newspapers that the government of the United States had solicited the Emperor of Russia's mediation, which party spirit in our country believes or pretends to believe that our government is systematically bent upon the war, and has no desire whatever for the restoration of peace. Party spirit I know is very capable of contending for both these pretences at once. I have seen it most eloquently demonstrated in the same papers, that eternal inextinguishable war with Britain is the master passion, the very Aaron's serpent of Mr. Madison's breast, and also that he is heartily tired and sick of the war, and

ready to catch at any straw to get out of it. Certain it is that he did not ask for the mediation of Russia, but that it was offered spontaneously by the Emperor of Russia himself. He was then and still is engaged in a war with France, in which he is the ally of England. The United States, as being at war with England, have a common cause with France. Yet the government of the United States immediately accepted the mediation of Russia, while the ally of Russia shows the utmost reluctance to accept, if not a positive determination to reject it.

The attachments of the American people to peace are so strong that I believe it would be impossible for them to be unanimous in a war for any cause whatever. The present is essentially a war for the independence of the nation. For no nation can be independent which suffers her citizens to be stolen from her at the discretion of the naval or military officers of another. I have seen that the legislature of Massachusetts had been making inquiries *how many* citizens of the United States had been impressed by the British. I should be glad to know *how many* of their native fellow citizens the legislature of Massachusetts would think it reasonable annually to abandon to a slavery, more degrading and more cruel than that of Algiers or of the West Indies, before they should consider the duty of protection to commerce. I read in the Constitution of Massachusetts that "the body politic is a social compact by which the *whole people* covenants with *each citizen* and *each citizen* with the *whole people*." Governor Strong and the majority of the Massachusetts legislature allow great weight to the British king's argument, that he has a right to impress his subjects, because he has a right to *their allegiance*. But what other foundation has the right of a sovereign to allegiance than the duty of *protection?* The right and the duty are

reciprocal, and the state is under a perfect obligation to protect every one of its citizens, as much as it has a right to claim their allegiance. The state by the social compact is bound to *protect* every one of its citizens, and the inquiry how many of them a foreign nation may be allowed to rob with impunity is itself a humiliation to which I blush to see that the legislature of my native state could descend. I remember that during the war of our Revolution it was a fashionable argument on the British side to say, that the Yankees were in rebellion to save three pence a pound in the cost of their tea. But the legislatures of Massachusetts of that day never instituted an inquiry *how much* the people of America would have to pay by submitting to the tax. It was "for a principle," as one of our poets said at that time, that "the Nation bled." It was a high minded war of a nation contending for its rights, and not basely casting up the farthings and pence which they might have to pay of impost upon glass and oil and painters' colors. The principle for which we are now struggling is of a higher and more sacred nature than any question about mere taxation can involve. It is the principle of personal liberty and of every social right. The question is not *how many* of our children we shall sacrifice without resistance to the Minotaur of the ocean, but whether our children shall have any security to protect them from being devoured by him. If in such a war we have not been able to unite, it is evident that nothing can unite us for the purpose of war. As to the project of separating the states, I apprehend it less than I have done heretofore, though the preservation of the Union may eventually cost us a civil war.

What the issue of that with which we are now afflicted will be is in the hand of providence. A career of success has attended the British government from the time when the war

began, which could not have been expected by any one, and which they were far from expecting themselves. How long it is to continue, and how far it is to extend, is not at this moment easy to foresee. The exertions however which they are now making are too violent to be capable of lasting long. Their expenditures for the present year amount to little less than 130 millions sterling. Their paper progresses in depreciation, gold is at £5.8 sterling an ounce (its standard value is £3.17.10½), and dollars pass for 6 shillings and 10 pence each. This is a depreciation of 50 per cent and at the same time they have enacted by law that there is no depreciation at all.

The war upon the continent of Europe has subsided for a few weeks by an armistice, but it is only to break out with new and more aggravated fury. In less than a week the hostilities are to recommence, and the fate of Europe is again to be committed to the wager of battle. It is said there are nearly a million of men arrayed in arms against one another in Germany. Half the number will suffice to fatten the region kites before the close of the year. The negotiations now broken off may possibly be resumed during the winter; but even then, unless something should occur to make the balance preponderate on one side or the other more than it now does, the furies will not yet be satiated with blood. I believe we must not expect a peace for ourselves until the general peace shall be made in Europe. I am, etc.[1]

[1] At the request of Count Romanzoff an "inofficial note" on the controversy between the United States and Great Britain was prepared by Gallatin and submitted August 2/14, 1813. An English translation by Adams is in *Writings of Gallatin*, I. 552. See Adams, *Memoirs*, August 10, 19, 26, 1813.

## TO THE COMTE DE ROMANZOFF

MONSIEUR LE COMTE:

Ayant communiqué au Sieur Robert Fulton la lettre que Votre Excellence m'a fait l'honneur de m'écrire en date du 6 Novembre dernier au sujet du privilège que j'avais sollicité en sa faveur pour la construction des chaloupes de son invention en Russie, et contenant la décision que Sa Majesté L'Empereur avait daigné lui accorder, je viens récemment de recevoir sa response à ma lettre. Il m'écrit qu'il accepte avec reconnaissance le privilège pour les rivières et les eaux navigables de la Russie généralement, et qu'il se conformera aux conditions qué S. M. L'Empereur a trouvé bon d'y prescrire. Il m'a en même temps chargé du soin d'obtenir l'édit en forme par lequel le privilège lui sera assuré ses engagements actuels ne permettant pas son absence personnellement des États Unis.

Il se propose de faire faire toute la partie mécanique pour la première chaloupe à une fabrique qu'il a déjà établie près de New York, ce qui fera d'autant plus nécessaire qu'il n'aurait pas le moyen de la faire faire ici, et ensuite d'envoyer ici son ingéniur en chef avec les fonds pour faire construite la chaloupe pour naviguer entre St. Pétersbourg et Cronstadt. Il ne doute pas qu'il pouvera la faire achever dans le courant de l'an 1815.

Son associé, le Sieur Livingston, etant mort depuis la lettre que j'eus l'honneur d'addresser à Votre Excellence sur ce sujet, Monsieur Fulton sollicite l'édit en son nom seul à lieu ses héritiers, exécuteurs testamentaires ou ayant causes.

Je dois ajouter en explication ultérieure de motif qui prive Monsieur Fulton de l'avantage de venir en personne présenter sa requête que dans la situation actuelle des

États Unis la navigation intérieure étant devenue d'autant plus importante que celle de la Côte est sujette à des obstructions extraordinaires Monsieur Fulton est maintenant employé à la construction de treize des chaloupes de son invention à la fois destinés à naviguer sur differentes rivières dans les États Unis.

Ce qui j'aurai donc encore à solliciter de Votre Excellence en faveur de M. Fulton sera de savoir si d'aprês les formes et les usages du gouvernement il me serait possible d'obtenir l'édit pour le privilège au nom de M. Fulton et sans que sa présence soit exigé. Il s'entend que je me chargerai de tous les frais pour l'expédition de l'édit dans les bureaux ou autres d'usage en pareils cas. Je crois qu'il ne peut être nécessaire d'assurer Votre Excellence qu'en m'offrant à ceci je n'y ai d'intérêt ou de motifs personnels que ceux d'obliger mon compatriote Monsieur Fulton, d'encourager le progrés des arts, et s'il m'est permis de le dire de contribuer à l'introduction dans cet vaste Empire d'une invention qui si l'événement répond à mes vœux ainsi qu'à l'expérience de ma patrie sera pour le commerce des sujets de S. M. Impériale d'une très grande utilité publique.

J'ai l'honneur d'être avec la plus haute considération, Monsieur le Comte, Votre très humble et très obéissant Serviteur.

St. Pétersbourg le 7. (19) Août, 1813.

## TO THE SECRETARY OF STATE

No. 117. [JAMES MONROE]

ST. PETERSBURG, 28th August, 1813.

SIR:

. . . . . .

You will learn by the dispatches of the joint mission [1] that this government has determined to renew the proposal of the mediation to the British ministry. The proposal to take this step was suggested to the Emperor by Count Romanzoff in a dispatch sent before the arrival of Mr. Gallatin and Mr. Bayard. You will have found it indicated in my No. 113 26 June. In answer to that dispatch the Emperor approved of the Count's idea and ordered him to proceed according to his own views. By a conversation which I lately had with the Count I conclude that the intimations given by the British minister to Count Lieven, the report of which was received by the Chancellor between the 15th and 22nd of June, were merely inofficial and verbal, for he expressly told me that the British government had not refused the mediation, and that there had been no official communication from them on the subject since that in answer to the first proposal of the mediation; it was made early last winter and merely expressed doubts whether a mediation could be successful owing to certain new pretensions which they alleged the American government had advanced. The aversion of the British government to *any* mediation between them and the United States lies deeper than they will be ready to avow. You will have other evidence of it besides the official answers to the Russian proposals. The

[1] The first, dated 17/29 August, is in *Writings of Gallatin*, I. 569.

Chancellor asked me in the recent conversation to which I allude (it was on the 19th instant) whether, if England should propose to transfer our negotiation from this place to London, we should have any objection to going there. I said that was a question which I could not answer without consulting my colleagues. That I could express only my individual opinion. There were two alternatives upon which England might propose that we should go to London. One was to treat more conveniently, but still under the Emperor's mediation; the other, to treat directly and without mediation. As to the first I supposed our powers would authorize us to go, and the only objection I saw to it was that we must thereby lose the benefit of his, Count Romanzoff's, friendly assistance and conciliatory disposition. But to go for the purpose of treating without mediation we had no powers. He said that his only object was to anticipate what might be proposed by England, and to have an answer ready, if such a proposition should come from her. It had occurred to him that we might have separate and other powers to treat directly and without any mediation. I said we had none to treat for peace. That the extraordinary mission was sent on the proposition made by the Emperor. His mediation was accepted with the same frankness as it had been offered. The President of the United States probably considered that it would not be very respectful to the Emperor to suppose that his mediation would be rejected by his ally, engaged with him in a common cause, or to furnish us with powers to treat on such a contingency. To have sent us with powers to treat without the mediation might, besides, have had the appearance of suing for peace, and have been so taken by the British government. This was an attitude which, sincerely as the American government desired peace, neither the condition of their affairs could require,

nor the spirit of their nation would brook. The Count replied, then he could only insist upon having the negotiation here, and he had great hopes the British government upon reconsideration would not only accept the mediation, but eventually be perfectly satisfied that the affair had taken this direction.

Lord Walpole has arrived on the continent and has been to the Emperor's headquarters. He is daily expected here where he is to reside as secretary of the embassy and minister plenipotentiary during the ambassador's absence. It is not improbable that the views of the British government concerning our mission may be further disclosed through him.

I am, etc

## TO JOHN ADAMS

St. Petersburg, 3 September, 1813.

Dear Sir:

This day thirty years ago you signed a definitive treaty of peace between the United States of America and Great Britain, and here am I authorized together with two others of our fellow citizens to perform the same service, but with little prospect of a like successful issue. The British government shows great disinclination to treat with the United States under a mediation. They have not yet formally rejected that of the Emperor of Russia, and since the arrival of our two envoys this government has renewed the proposal, to which an evasive answer had been in the first instance returned. Mr. Gallatin and Mr. Bayard are waiting for the ultimate answer from England; they will probably be under the necessity of passing from London before the

1st of November, and by that time the waters will be locked up until June.

Inofficial and indirect hints have been communicated to us that the British government are willing to treat with us directly, and without the intervention of a mediator. But for this we must be invested with new powers; for our government had so little expectation that England would spurn the good offices of her close ally that no provision was made for the contingency.

The English ministerial gazettes have avowed as one objection to the Russian mediation, that Russia must be supposed to be partial in favor of the principles of the armed neutrality. But a peace between America and Britain may be made without reference to any of the principles of the armed neutrality. Another and more decisive objection they allege is, that England ought never to submit the discussion of her maritime rights to *any* mediation.

The reasoning has from other sources been presented to us in a different form. We have been told that as the only point between the two nations upon which the war now hinges is impressment, it is a question concerning the relative rights and duties of sovereign and subject. That it is a question which never can arise between any two nations besides England and America. That it is a sort of family quarrel with which other nations can have no concern, and in which their interference can be productive of no good result. That the tendency of a mediation would be to complicate the controversy, to entangle it in the snarl of general European politics, and to make it an engine for French intrigue to work upon, to scatter abroad still more abundantly than ever the seeds of discord and confusion.

The controversy as between the two nations does not involve any question of the relative rights and duties of sover-

eign and subject. Admitting the British king's right to impress his subjects in all the extent he can claim, the question remains whether he can exercise the right *out* of his own jurisdiction. This question does not touch the right either of sovereign or subject, and this is precisely the question between Britain and America. It is a question, therefore, which in point of *principle* concerns all other nations as much as it does the two belligerents. It is whether the British king can inforce the municipal law of England on board of the ships of all other nations in the jurisdiction which is common to them all. That it is exclusively a contest between the United States and England is directly at variance with the pretence so often and so loudly urged, that impressment from foreign ships on the high seas has been practised by immemorial usage. It is indeed true that no such immemorial usage ever existed, and that as American ships were the only foreign vessels on board of which the British officers did impress, it is not likely ever to be a specific cause of war between any other two nations. But the correct inference from this would be, that it is a subject peculiarly suitable for a mediation, the mediator having no interest of his own to bias him on either side, and both parties being therefore more sure of his impartiality. Even if it were true that the rights of sovereign and subject were implicated in the contest, how would they be implicated? Britain fights for the right of the sovereign, and America for the duty of the sovereign. Britain fights for the claim to the service of the subject, and America for the claim of the subject to protection. In referring the question to the mediation of the Emperor of Russia, were it possible to suppose him susceptible of a bias which way would it be? Could the most absolute sovereign in Europe be supposed to favor any claim of the subject to exemption from the duty

of service? If we disputed the British king's right to the service of his subjects, *we* might now naturally object to the mediation of *any* sovereign, because it would be a question upon which the partialities of all sovereigns must be against us; and least of all could we have reason to expect favor from the autocrat of Russia, within whose dominions Magna Carta and the Habeas Corpus act have no force. But England could have no occasion for distributing a mediation, of which she must know that the whole interest of the mediator would be on her side.

The fear of complicating the maritime question between Britain and America with the general politics of Europe is just and rational on the part of England. But it ought to operate upon her as a warning to her to settle her differences with America upon liberal principles. The dread of French intrigue by the mediation of a prince at deadly war with France can have no foundation. No nation ever more steadily and more earnestly pursued any one course of policy than America has sought to avoid all entanglement with European politics; but if England will persist in having a war with America, she must not expect that America will always be willing to fight her single handed. She will eventually find it for her interest to make a common cause with the enemies of England wherever they are to be found, and how far that may make her subservient to the views of France, she will consider for herself without asking the advice of England.

There are probably other motives besides those that are acknowledged which indispose the British government to the mediation, and which must protract the war, if they do not ultimately defeat the negotiation for peace. The war on the European continent has again broken out, and the coalition against France is more formidable than it ever has

been since the year 1793. On the south she is already contending for her own frontiers. In the north Russia, Austria, Sweden, Prussia, and a great part of Germany are combined against her. Two of her most famous generals are in the field under the banners of her enemies, and a third at the moment when hostilities were renewed deserted to them. There is no doubt but at this moment a battle has already been fought upon which the issue of the campaign will depend, and in that the destinies of the European world are involved. The symptoms of weakness and of rottenness in the French force are so great and so numerous, that according to every rational anticipation she must sink in the struggle. The coalesced powers have not yet declared their views on the terms upon which they would agree to a peace. I am etc.

## TO THE SECRETARY OF STATE

No. 118. [JAMES MONROE]

ST. PETERSBURG, 8 SEPTEMBER, 1813.

SIR:

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It is a circumstance to be regretted and which appears to be not undeserving of the attention of the government that all the accounts relative to American affairs published on the continent of Europe come through the medium of English gazettes. In the present situation of things the public opinion in Europe inclines but too much of itself in favor of England, upon whose financial resources the great struggle of the present moment so essentially depends. What representations of American concerns the

French public journals may contain I am not informed, but I apprehend even they are for the most part copied from the English papers. The misrepresentations of the English accounts are spread all over Europe and there is much industry used in the circulation of them. Translations of the British Regent's declaration of 9 January, 1813, were sent from the foreign office, and were published here in the Russian, German and French languages in the gazettes which have an official sanction. In the German and Russian gazette they were even introduced by a remark that this declaration contained a *correct* statement of the origin of the differences between the United States and Great Britain. I thought it my duty to take notice of this to the Chancellor, and as a demonstration how *incorrect* the view of the subject in the British declaration was, I requested of him to permit the publication in the same papers of the President's message and the report of the Committee of Foreign Relations upon which the declaration of war was founded. He promised me that they should be published in the translations that I should furnish. I accordingly procured French, German and Russian translations of those papers to be made, and they were to have been published just at the time when the account came of the appointment of the extraordinary mission to negotiate under the Emperor's mediation. As the Chancellor then suggested a wish that the publication might be postponed I consented to it under his renewed promise that it should only be postponed. I believe those two most important documents have not been published anywhere on this continent, while the Regent's declaration has been circulated and distributed probably in every language of Europe.

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## TO R. G. BEASLEY

ST. PETERSBURG, 9 September, 1813.

SIR:

I had the pleasure of writing you on the 31st of last month by the opportunity of a Russian courier; since then I have received your favor of 13 August enclosing Cobbett's remarks on the question concerning naturalized citizens taken prisoners.

The spirit of the *Courier* is probably higher toned than the British ministers will countenance by their practice. During the War of our Revolution the ministry and even Parliament actually did on the principle of allegiance what the *Courier* now threatens us with. While they treated us as public enemies on the field and on the ocean, they actually passed laws to punish us as traitors and pirates when taken prisoners. On this principle they kept Mr. Laurens in the Tower as a state prisoner. It was on this principle that they attempted to palliate the numberless acts of barbarity which they indulged themselves in against it during the whole course of that war. Rebels, they said, were not entitled to the benefits of the law of nations. They get nothing by it now but a renewal of the same disgrace if they adopt the advice of the *Courier*. Cobbett's observations on the subject are judicious and remarkably moderate. But as his opinions are likely to have very little weight, they will do well to consult those of one whose voice and pen were as unavailing then as those of Cobbett are now, but of whom they are now used to speak and think with reverence. I mean Edmund Burke. His letter to the sheriffs of Bristol contains views of this question which British statesmen might now consult with great advantage to themselves.

The application of the principle of allegiance was then universal to all the Americans; it can now be applied only to our naturalized citizens, and to them cannot be applied without the grossest inconsistency and inhumanity.

Cobbett has mentioned the case of Prince Eugene, but there are two instances now which would have been more signally applicable to his argument—the Crown Prince of Sweden and General Moreau. It is possible that *lawyers* may adduce distinctions absolving those two officers from the duties of allegiance to the present *Ruler of France*, and warranting them in the act of commanding armies against those of France. But these distinctions could only operate as exceptions to the general principle of allegiance, and the exception which would justify Moreau, would equally justify many of the naturalized American citizens who may be taken in arms against Britain. It is admitted even by the common lawyers that allegiance may be alienated by the consent of the sovereign to whom it is due, and upon every principle of justice banishment must be considered as alienating the right of allegiance. When the sovereign, whether by way of commutation for other punishment, or from whatever motive, compels his subject to depart from his territories and go into those of another state, he forces him to change his allegiance, and makes him amenable to the laws of his new sovereign. Most of the Irish exiles are substantially, if not formally, in this predicament. To claim from them the duties of allegiance after having cast them out from all the rights of protection, would be neither just, nor consistent, nor even common law.

It is the misfortune of America to present to great numbers of British subjects a country more capable of making them happy than that in which they were born. The adopted parent is more kind and affectionate than the natural mother.

America uses no blandishment to entice away the children of other nations. She naturalizes no seamen, merely for serving two years on board her ships. There is not a country in Europe whose conditions of naturalization are so rigorous as those of the United States. But Britain is now waging against us this cruel war, because her subjects prefer America for their country rather than her their native land. Cobbett has touched lightly upon this topic, but I believe it is the deepest root of the war.

I can give you no news from this quarter. We are in expectation of the ultimate answer from England, but are uncertain whether it will arrive in time or be of a nature to admit the return of Mr. Gallatin and Mr. Bayard to the United States the present year. I am, etc.

## TO ABIGAIL ADAMS

St. Petersburg, 21 September, 1813.

This day two months have elapsed since Mr. Gallatin and Mr. Bayard arrived and delivered to me your favors of 5 and 23 April. Nothing later from you has yet come to hand. Very shortly after their arrival the ship *Hannibal*, belonging to Mr. Astor, of New York, arrived at Gothenburg. This vessel was furnished with a British license with a permission even to bring a cargo and to carry one back in return, all in consideration of a passenger whom she conveyed to Europe. The passenger was General Moreau. She sailed from New York the 22nd of June, and he landed at Gothenburg the 25 July. One of his fellow passengers who had a special charge to accompany him, wrote a letter to a friend here, which I have heard read, expressing an opinion that the voyage had been so short and prosperous by the particular

smiles of Providence upon the purpose for which he came. From Gothenburg General Moreau crossed the Baltic and landed at Stralsund, where he had an affecting interview with the Crown Prince of Sweden, another French general now commanding an army against France. General Moreau then proceeded to the Emperor Alexander's headquarters, and arrived at Prague precisely at the moment when the two Emperors of Russia and of Austria were meeting to commence the campaign of the new coalition against Napoleon. This was the 15th of August. The 16th was the day upon which the armistice was terminated, and on the 10th the Austrian declaration of war against France had been delivered to the French ambassador at Prague. On the 17th hostilities were to commence. General Moreau entered the Russian service, and was appointed first aid-de-camp general to the Emperor Alexander. On the 22d he wrote from the Emperor's headquarters a letter which I have read.[1] It said that he had come to fight against Bonaparte, and that he should do it without the slightest repugnance. That if he contributed to the overthrow of Bonaparte, he should have the thanks of France as well as of the rest of Europe. That if the coalition had destroyed Robespierre, France would have thanked them for it. That the banner is of little consequence when a man succeeds. Three days afterwards the allied Austrian, Russian, and Prussian main army invaded Saxony from Bohemia, and on the 26th of August they were at the gates of Dresden. On the 27th Napoleon with 100,000 men went out from Dresden and gave them battle. A cannon ball took both the feet of General Moreau from under him, and shattered both his legs so that on the same day he was obliged to undergo the amputation of them both. The movement of the armies

[1] To Gallatin, printed in *Writings of Gallatin*, I. 562.

made it necessary to remove him in this condition to Toplitz, where he died on the 2nd of this month, greatly regretted by the sovereign to whom his services had just been devoted, and at whose side he fell.

He was in arms against his native country. Although I do not subscribe to the British doctrine of unalienable allegiance in the extent to which they wish to drive it in their disputes and wars with us, I do consider that very great and weighty causes are essential to justify a man for bearing arms against his native country. That there were causes sufficient for his justification is, to say the least, extremely questionable. He probably was not formally bound in allegiance to Napoleon, and might perhaps have cause of complaint against his native country. But from the time of his first participation in the intrigues to restore the Bourbons in 1795, and his accusation of Pichegru, with whom he had been concerned in them, I have always considered him as a man who thought success the only standard of virtue. This is always the maxim of wavering unsteady characters. It is a principle in itself so loose and unsettled that it almost always finishes by betraying those who confide in it. Moreau has often been heard to declare that he would never take up arms against France. He had declined proposals previously made to him, when the prospect of success was not so bright. With the change of his country's fortune his aversion to fight against her disappears. He comes five thousand miles to join the standard of her enemies, and one of the first cannon balls that is fired sends him to his account, a memorable warning to others not to judge of the moral merit of the banner by *success*. Eight days after he was dead a long and elaborate article in the gazette of this city assured the world that *Providence* had preserved the life of Moreau through thousands of dangers in battles, through

conspiracies, amidst plagues, and over oceans, to make him the instrument of some great and extraordinary purpose of beneficence to mankind.

Providence did not intend to make him any longer the instrument of any purpose, either merciful or afflictive. But it has manifested in the most unequivocal manner the intention of turning the tide of success. If success were the standard of excellence, what mortal since the creation of the world had for a compass of twenty years such signal proofs of the favor of Providence as Napoleon. He too fancied himself more than mortal. He dreamt that he was the dispenser of destiny to mankind. It would seem that even yet he has not awaked from his dream. He left one immense army to fatten the region kites of Russia, and another is now perishing under his hands by the sword of his enemies and by famine. All Europe is now conjured against him. His inflexible spirit has bid defiance to Austria in addition to all those he had before. But his means of resistance are sinking under him, and since the renewal of the war he has been defeated in almost every quarter. His armies are disheartened. He is surrounded with disaffection and treachery. His enemies are flushed with success, embittered by the remembrance of former losses, and struggling with desperation for their own existence. "What is it (says the son of Sirach) "if one be highly famed? yet it is known that he is but a man; neither may he contend with him that is mightier than he."

Mr. Gallatin and Mr. Bayard are still here, waiting for a definitive answer from England whether the British government will treat under the Russian mediation or not. In the meantime the accounts from America leave them in suspense, and under an uncertainty whether the Senate have confirmed the nominations to this commission. The news which we

receive respecting the progress of the war is less favorable than we had anticipated, and we hear of the opposition from Massachusetts in all its vehemence. I approve much of your principle never to despond, and hope for an improving futurity. By the blessings of God we are in tolerable health. Charles goes regularly to school and improves in his writing as fast as I can expect.

Remember me dutifully to my father and affectionately to my children. I have lately written to them all, and hope to have the opportunity of writing soon again; until which I remain as ever affectionately yours.

## TO ABIGAIL ADAMS

ST. PETERSBURG, 14 October, 1813.

I have just this moment returned from attending the funeral obsequies of the late General Moreau, which have been solemnized with suitable splendor at the Roman Catholic church of this city. He died at Töplitz on the 2nd of September, of the wounds he had received before Dresden the 27th of August. His body was sent here by order of the Emperor Alexander, and has been buried with all the honors to which he was entitled by his merits and by falling in the Emperor's service, and at his side. The church service was performed by the Archbishop of Mohileff, the Roman Catholic Metropolitan of the Empire, and a funeral sermon was preached in the French language by Father Mosevil, professor of Philosophy at the Jesuit College in this city. His text was from the Wisdom of Solomon, Chap. 9, v. 13: "For what man is he that can know the counsel of God? or who can think what the will of the Lord is?"—a text certainly well chosen though from an Apocryphal book. The

orator's task was not without its delicacy and its difficulty. His duty was to pronounce a panegyric, and all the titles of his hero to glory were acquired in contending against the cause for which he finally lost his life. There were no services to the Russian Empire to speak of, for the first day of his active service had terminated his career. From the narrow and dangerous pass the preacher extricated himself as successfully as the general had extricated his army in his celebrated retreat, by expatiating upon the inscrutable counsels of God, and by transferring his encomium from the general to the Emperor, whose magnanimity considered not less services intended than services performed, and who manifested his sense of the exploits which would have been achieved, had the Hero not been arrested in his career by a premature death.

I have not had the pleasure of receiving a line from you since I wrote you last. Mr. Gallatin and Mr. Bayard will probably be obliged to pass the winter here, for we have no final answer yet from England, and when it comes the Gulf of Finland will be no longer navigable. They intend however to send the ship to Gothenburg, and if on the receipt of the answer from the British government there should be nothing left for them but to return home, they will go through Sweden by land, and may embark from Gothenburg in the winter, or at least in the spring, two or three months earlier than they could go from this place.[1]

The progress of the war in Germany has been since the recommencement of hostilities so favorable to the allies, and so much against the French, that the campaign of 1813 has every prospect of terminating as disastrously to the Emperor Napoleon as that of 1812. The Emperor Alexander has had

[1] A letter from the Commissioners to the Secretary of State, October 3/15, 1813, is in *Writings of Gallatin*, I. 587.

a silver medal struck to commemorate the campaign of 1812. On one side is the eye of Providence inclosed within a triangle, and on the other the inscription in Russian "not unto us, not unto us"; it is to be distributed to every officer and soldier who served during that campaign, and to be worn suspended by a blue ribbon at the button hole, without distinction of ranks, from the Field Marshal to the common soldier.

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## TO BENJAMIN WATERHOUSE

ST. PETERSBURG, 24 October, 1813.

DEAR SIR:

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I am not displeased to hear that Ohio, Kentucky, Indiana and Louisiana are rapidly peopling with Yankees. I consider them as an excellent race of people, and as far as I am able to judge I believe that their moral and political character far from degenerating improves by emigration. I have always felt on that account a sort of predilection for those rising western states, and have seen with no small astonishment the prejudices harbored against them by the New England junto-federalists. There is not upon this globe of earth a spectacle exhibited by man so interesting to my mind or so consolatory to my heart as this metamorphosis of howling deserts into cultivated fields and populous villages which is yearly, daily, hourly, going on by the hands chiefly of New England men in our western states and territories. If New England loses her influence in the councils of the Union it will not be owing to any diminution of her population occasioned by these emigrations; it will be from the

partial, sectarian, or as Hamilton called it *clannish*, spirit which makes so many of her political leaders jealous and envious of the west and of the south. This spirit is in its nature narrow and contracted, and it always works by means like itself. Its natural tendency is to excite and provoke a counteracting spirit of the same character, and it has actually produced that effect in our country. It has combined the southern and western parts of the United States, not in a league but in a concert of political views adverse to those of New England. The fame of all the great legislators of antiquity is founded upon their contrivances to strengthen and multiply the principles of attraction in civil society. Our legislators seem to delight in multiplying and fomenting the principles of repulsion.

If I could by any act of mine contribute to the restoration of a *just and honorable* peace to our country, I should be ready to say "Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, for mine eyes have seen thy salvation." But I have little reason to flatter myself that such are the intentions of Providence. The British government have manifested a strong disinclination to treat with United States under any mediation, and although we are not yet informed of their having expressly refused that of Russia, they have not appointed any person to treat with us under it, and we are in hourly expectation of receiving their final answer. The great successes which they have had in their European affairs have made them more indifferent about a peace with America, and although they are indebted to Russia for all those successes, they are not more inclined to submit any of their maritime pretensions to the umpirage of a Russian mediator.

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## TO ABIGAIL ADAMS

ST. PETERSBURG, 25 October, 1813.

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Although I am duly sensible to the gentlemanly politeness of Sir John Sherbrook in permitting my letters to be transmitted to you, I do not wish to give him the trouble to peruse any more of my epistles, or to write any adapted for his perusal. Yet I see not why I should withhold my opinions upon some of the subjects mentioned in your letters. For instance, I am not of opinion with the Senate of Massachusetts that the present war is waged on the part of the United States without justifiable cause, as little as I am of their opinion that it has been prosecuted in a manner indicating that conquest and ambition are its real motives.[1] But if I concurred with them in both those opinions, I should still from the bottom of my soul disclaim the conclusion which the said honorable Senate have drawn from it, and declared to be their sense, to wit, that it was not becoming a *moral* and *religious* people to express any approbation of military or naval exploits which are not immediately connected with the defense of our sea coast and soil.

A moral and religious people are bound in sacred duty to express approbation of military or naval exploits performed in their service, even although the Senate of Massachusetts should think the war unjust, even though the war should be really unjust, provided that they who performed the ex-

[1] "*Resolved*, as the sense of the Senate of Massachusetts that in a war like the present, waged without justifiable cause, and prosecuted in a manner which indicates that conquest and ambition are its true motives, it is not becoming a moral and religious people to express any approbation of military or naval exploits, which are not immediately connected with our defense of our sea coast and soil."

ploits believed it to be just. The *virtue* of all action depends upon the motives of the actor, and it is neither moral nor religious to take Mr. Quincy's opinion as to the justice of the cause for a standard to measure the merit of exploits achieved by Hull, Decatur, and Bainbridge. There is a book much esteemed by moral and religious men which says, "Who art thou that judgest another man's servant? To his own master he standeth or falleth." If I could degrade myself in my own mind, and sink deep enough into the kennels of faction to embrace the opinion that the redemption of my seafaring countrymen from the accursed oppression of British press-gang is *not* a justifiable cause of war, I should still think it possible that other men quite as patriotic as myself might be of a different opinion. And when I saw such men displaying heroic virtue in support of their country's cause, and sealing the sincerity of their belief with their blood, I should feel and would express approbation of their exploits, unless with the loss of all sense of my country's rights I had also lost all sense of morals, religion and truth.

I had seen some weeks since in the English newspapers this pious resolution, but I never thought much of its ingenuity, even as a party measure. I know very well that it could disgrace none but those who voted for it. I know very well that if the exploits should continue to be achieved the moral and religious people would not ask Mr. Quincy or the Senate of Massachusetts for permission to express their approbation of them; and if the deed of glory was performed, I cared very little whether Mr. Quincy or the Senate of Massachusetts expressed *their* approbation of it or not. The approbation which avowedly hangs the virtue of one man upon the motives of another is too worthless to be an object of desire to men of real honor, morals, or religion.

Since I began this letter I have seen the *National Intel-*

*ligencers* of 3 and 5 August, containing all the proceedings of the United States Senate upon the nominations to the Russian mission and the projected mission to Sweden. The situation in which these transactions place us is a little awkward, but we have yet no official information of the event. We have no reason to expect that the British government will treat at all under the mediation, but Mr. Gallatin and Mr. Bayard have hitherto been waiting here for a final answer from England, which has not yet been received. They have at their disposal the ship in which they came, and intended to send her round to Gothenburg before the freezing of the river here. Her departure has however been so long delayed that it is not certain she will now be able to get away. We have the ground already covered with snow and Fahrenheit's thermometer at ten degrees below the freezing point. Four or five days of such weather will lock us up for the winter.

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## TO WILLIAM HARRIS CRAWFORD

ST. PETERSBURG, 15 November, 1813.

DEAR SIR:

I have received your obliging favors of 13th and 30th of September, and since your arrival in France have been seriously wishing for the means of communicating with you. The conveyance through Copenhagen has, however, been so precarious, not only from the state of the relations between Sweden and Denmark, but from the continually varying aspect of affairs on the Elbe and Holstein, that I have not until now ventured to write to you; and even at present shall commit this to one of our countrymen going to Sweden,

but without any certainty in what manner, or from whence it will eventually be transmitted to you.

It is true that the British government has finally and positively refused to treat with the United States under the mediation of the Emperor of Russia; but we have as yet no official notification of the fact. We are indirectly informed that they have sent to the Emperor Alexander at his headquarters a long and elaborate memoir to justify their refusal of the mediation, and they have at the same time manifested their willingness to treat with the American envoys directly, either at Gothenburg or in London. Should this proposal come in a shape upon which we could deliberate, we should ask for further instructions respecting it from America. But from what we know of the dispositions of the British ministry you may safely conclude that your negotiations will meet with no obstacle from any possible success of ours.

Mr. Gallatin and Mr. Bayard are here waiting for the official communication from this government of the rejection of the mediation by the British. The Emperor Alexander gave orders that our letters of credence should be received by his Chancellor here, and that we should be recognized in all the usual diplomatic forms, although he was absent. The *Neptune* is gone to Gothenburg, whither it is the intention of Mr. Gallatin and Mr. Bayard to proceed by land to embark for the United States, as soon as we shall have authentic information of the British determination.

Prince Kurakin some time since informed me that he knew his chapel furniture, etc., was in Mr. Warden's possession, with which he appeared to be well satisfied. I understood him to say that he had requested him to keep it until the arrival of Mr. Barlow's successor, and then to place it under his custody. Perhaps Mr. Warden waits until you shall

have been officially received and recognized to execute the Prince's directions. I regret that Mr. Thomas Barlow ever permitted it to be removed, though I hope it has been safely kept. . . .

## TO THE SECRETARY OF STATE

No. 124. [JAMES MONROE]

ST. PETERSBURG, 22 November, 1813.

SIR:

The communications which will be transmitted to you by the present occasion will inform you that the British government have at length positively and definitively refused to treat with the United States under the mediation of Russia. We have, however, hitherto no official statement of this fact, and Mr. Gallatin and Mr. Bayard are waiting only to receive it. The *Neptune* sailed on the 2nd instant from Cronstadt for Gothenburg, and a few days afterwards put in to Reval, from which place we have not heard of her departure. When she left Cronstadt there was every prospect that the river and gulf would be closed within two days; an unusual return of moderate weather immediately afterwards succeeded, and the navigation is yet open a month later than commonly happens at this season.

With the refusal to negotiate under the mediation we are indirectly told that the British government have manifested a willingness and even a desire to negotiate with the American mission directly, either at Gothenburg or at London. They have been informed that we have no powers authorizing us to treat otherwise than under the mediation, but they have given intimations that *they* would raise no question

with regard to the extent of our powers. At the same time we have been given distinctly to understand that they will agree to no stipulation whatsoever renouncing or abandoning the practice of impressment on board our merchant vessels. They profess a desire for peace and a disposition to agree to arrangements for guarding against what they call the abuse of impressment to our satisfaction; but nothing can be more explicit than their avowal of a determination to yield nothing with regard to the practice itself. If the powers of the mission extended to the acceptance of the invitation to treat directly, and to repair for that purpose to Gothenburg or to London, it would be perfectly useless to go there under the present state of our instructions, since the only *basis* upon which the offer to treat with us is made, is precisely that which we are expressly forbidden to accept. Mr. Gallatin and Mr. Bayard have it, however, in contemplation to touch in England on their passage to the United States, and will there be able to ascertain, whether the British government can be brought to more accommodating dispositions, as well as what modifications they would propose of the practice to make it satisfactory to the United States.

I am, etc.

## TO ABIGAIL ADAMS

St. Petersburg, 30 December, 1813.

As the time is approaching for the departure of Mr. Gallatin and Mr. Bayard, and as the month and year are drawing to a close, I avail myself now of the opportunity of writing to you by them, although it is yet uncertain when they will go, and still more uncertain how long it will be before they reach the United States.

The British government peremptorily refused negotiating for peace with America under the mediation of the Emperor of Russia. This has been perfectly well known to us these two months, and has been sufficiently announced to the world by the English Regent in his speech at the opening of the session of Parliament. But in order that my colleagues may be enabled to take leave of this court, the official communication of the refusal of the British government to treat must come from the Russian government to us. It has not yet been made, and the delay is owing to the absence of the Emperor Alexander from his capital, and probably to the transactions more important to him than his offered mediation, in which he has been so deeply engaged during the whole course of the present year. The events of the time have been too conspicuous and too memorable in the history of the world not to be well known to you, and many considerations will occur to you dispensing me from the task of enlarging upon them. But in the various and continual movements of the armies which, with the exception of the armistice, have been incessant, in the vicissitudes of fortune which have marked the military history of the year, and in the multitude of complicated negotiations and of sanguinary battles which have occupied and engrossed the Emperor's time, it is not surprising that some delays should have taken place in the course of the communications from his government to us. These delays are less materially important as the season of the year has been unpropitious for travellers; so that if Mr. Gallatin and Mr. Bayard could have left this place sooner, they would scarcely have been advancing upon their voyage which they could not in any case have completed until the return of spring.

In refusing the mediation the British ministry through an indirect channel have intimated a willingness to treat with

the American envoys directly, and have given us a sort of invitation to go thither for that purpose. We have no authority either to treat thus with them or to go to England. But Mr. Gallatin and Mr. Bayard, considering the mission of mediation as terminated on their departure from this place, have it in contemplation to stop in England on their way home, and will probably wait there for further instructions from the United States, and at the same time ascertain what prospect there may be of a favorable issue for a direct negotiation, if our government should deem it advisable to substitute that mode of treating in the place of the rejected mediation.

I speak of both my colleagues, because the decision of the Senate with regard to Mr. Gallatin, of which we were informed through the medium of the newspapers about the 17th of October, and which had taken place in July, is to this day officially a secret to us as much as the refusal of the mediation by the British. We have not a line from our own government dated later than 23 June, and Mr. Gallatin's powers to act are yet unimpaired by any revocation which he considers as authentic.

When the navigable season here was finishing, the *Neptune* was ordered to Gothenburg there to wait for the gentlemen; but as the events of the war have opened the mouth of the Elbe and the ports of Holland, they will perhaps order her to Helvoetsluys and perform the journey thither by land. The communication with Holland by post is not yet opened here, but undoubtedly will be within a few days and in time to enable them to go in that direction.

For my part I am still bound up here in these "thrilling regions of thick ribbed ice." I am unable to judge whether our government will think proper to accept the overture from the British for a direct negotiation, and if they should, whether

the President and Senate will consider it expedient to charge me with any participation in it. The determination of the British government has released me from the responsibility of a trust which would have weighed heavily upon my mind had the negotiation been formally entered upon, but it will be attended with much greater difficulties in the direct form. If on our side it should be concluded to make the attempt, and I should be joined in a new commission for that purpose, I shall be gratified with it as furnishing me the occasion of returning to my friends, my family and my country; for the prospect is faint indeed of the possibility of accomplishing any peace with England consistent with our rights as an independent nation. But a good cause should never despair of the blessing of Providence.

. . . . . .

## TO THE SECRETARY OF STATE

No. 125. [JAMES MONROE]

ST. PETERSBURG, 30 December, 1813.

SIR:

. . . . . .

The event of the campaign in Germany has been such as was to be expected after the accession of Austria to the cause of the allies, and the defection of the Princes of the Rhenish Confederation from that of France. By the sudden and it would seem unexpected change in the policy of Bavaria, and by the junction of the Bavarian with an Austrian army behind the Emperor Napoleon, his army was placed in a situation so desperate that nothing but his extraordinary military genius, which has never yet deserted him, could

have saved so large a portion of them from the extremity to which they were reduced, and in the midst of treachery of every description have effected a retreat, through a hostile country, and through an host of adverse forces at least three times more numerous than his own.

In the battles near Leipzig, which continued from the 15th to the 18th of October, the combined Russian, Austrian, Prussian, and Swedish armies amounted according to their own statement, probably underrated, to 400,000 men. The number with the Emperor Napoleon did not exceed 150,000. His loss there was about 40,000, and with the remnant he was yet to cut his way through an Austrian and Bavarian army of 80,000 men in his rear, which he actually accomplished at Hanau, and reached Mayence, his official statements say, with 100,000 men. From Mayence he returned immediately to Paris. The headquarters of the Emperors of Russia and Austria, and the King of Prussia, were transferred in the beginning of November to Frankfort on the Main.

A corps of about 25,000 men commanded by Marshal Gouvion St. Cyr had been left by the Emperor Napoleon at Dresden. After making an unsuccessful attempt to effect their retreat to Magdeburg, they obtained a capitulation so favorable that Prince Schwarzenberg the commander in chief of the combined armies refused to ratify it, and they have been sent as prisoners of war into Bohemia. The fortresses of Dantzig, Stettin, Modlin and Tamose have also capitulated.

The retreat of the French corps on the lower Elbe under Marshal Davoust has also been cut off. The kingdom of Westphalia dissolved itself without resistance, and a revolution was immediately effected in Holland. A deputation was sent to the Prince of Orange, who was in England, inviting him to return with the offer of the royal title, which he de-

clined. But he assumed that of sovereign prince of the United Netherlands, probably as a temporary character to be definitively settled when a constitution shall be given to the country. The constitution, the proclamations say, is to be prescribed by the Prince himself, and nothing explicit is announced of its character, excepting that it is not to revive the old constitution of the United Provinces or the office of Stadtholder. All this of course is merely provisional, and will eventually terminate in arrangements under the sanction and guaranty of the combined powers, and as far as will be found practicable under the dictate of England.

The progress of the Austrian arms in Italy has been slower and with more considerable vicissitudes. The Viceroy has however been generally upon the defensive, and has been retreating to the Adige. As the appointment to the Austrian chief command has recently been transferred to General Bellegarde, it is probable that in the ensuing campaign that country will be the scene of greater and more important exertions.

In Spain the fortresses of St. Sebastian and of Pampeluna have surrendered, and Lord Wellington with his army has entered upon the French territory. So that France is at this moment invaded at once on her northern and southern boundaries.

The Swiss Confederation have declared a neutrality, but it is said that this does not suit the views of the combined powers, and that Switzerland will be under the necessity not only of allowing the passage to their troops, but of joining their cause and furnishing a contingent of men.

Three successive conscriptions of 30,000, 280,000 and 300,000 men have been authorized in France since the month of August. Two armies of 100,000 men each are to be as-

sembled at Bordeaux and at Turin, and the rest, if they can be raised, will doubtless be employed to strengthen the line of defence from Holland to the frontier of Switzerland.

The Emperors of Russia and Austria and the King of Prussia have issued a proclamation at Frankfort preparatory to their invasion of France beyond the Rhine. They renew the assurance of their great attachment to the happiness of France, connected with their determination to be also happy themselves. They say they are willing that France should be greater than she ever was under her Kings, and that they have made proposals of peace to the Emperor Napoleon. Whether these proposals were accepted or rejected they do not say. There has been a general change of ministry in France, where the Duke Vicence is now the Minister of Foreign Relations, the Duke of Bassano having resumed the office of Minister Secretary of State, and Count Molé is Grand Judge in the place of Régnier.

Of all these events, as well as of the several treaties of alliance and subsidy between Great Britain and the combined powers, you will have more direct and earlier information than it would have been possible for me to give you. Should a negotiation take place, I think there is little prospect of its terminating at present, or even very soon in a peace. The Emperor Alexander has no expectation of returning soon to his capital, and he has just invited the Empress to join him at his headquarters. She is to leave this city upon that journey tomorrow morning.

I am, etc.

## TO ROBERT FULTON

ST. PETERSBURG, 31 December, 1813.

SIR:

Immediately after receiving your favor of 19 June last I made application in writing to the Chancellor Count Romanzoff, stating your request that I would take out the ukase for your privilege to build steamboats in this country. To this application I have received no answer, nor is it possible for me to say when an answer is to be expected.

There is no standing law here for granting patents to the authors of useful inventions. Every grant of that nature is made by a special act of the Emperor's will. The Emperor has been more than a year absent from his Dominions, and it is highly probable that more than another year will elapse before his return. The objects which engross his attention are of such magnitude that it may be impossible for him to bestow time upon those of less pressing urgency.

I have reason to believe that after the promise contained in Count Romanzoff's letter, of which I sent you a copy, was given, there was an effort made to counteract its accomplishment. I have understood that the person who was the bearer of your letter to me, who had seen your boats and their success in the United States, had himself a project of obtaining an exclusive privilege for a similar invention, and made a representation that he had invented a boat of the same kind and very much improved upon yours. I do not know that this application produced any effect, but as the person has returned to Europe and has been at the Emperor's headquarters, I think it necessary to give you notice of the circumstance that you may draw your own conclusions.

General Betancourt, who informs me that he is an old ac-

quaintance and friend of yours, is now in the Emperor's service, and has the superintendence of the Department of Water Communications. It was upon a reference of the first application on your part for the privilege to him and to the Minister of the Interior, and upon a favorable report from them, that the Emperor promised the privilege. General Betancourt has repeatedly and very recently mentioned the subject to me. He advised that you should immediately send your agent and construct one of your boats, considering Count Romanzoff's letter to me of which I sent you the copy as of itself equivalent to a patent. He says that he considers it so himself. That as an immediate act of the Emperor's will it requires no other formality, and that if it should fail to answer as a warrant for you to proceed in your design, any patent or ukase that you could obtain here would prove equally ineffectual. I place great reliance upon General Betancourt's judgment and equal confidence in his friendly disposition to you. I believe that he is aware that there are interfering applications to appropriate to others the benefit of your ingenuity, and he thinks the best way to prevent their success would be for you to send your engineer here without delay, and to take the Emperor's promise already given for a patent. I am, etc.

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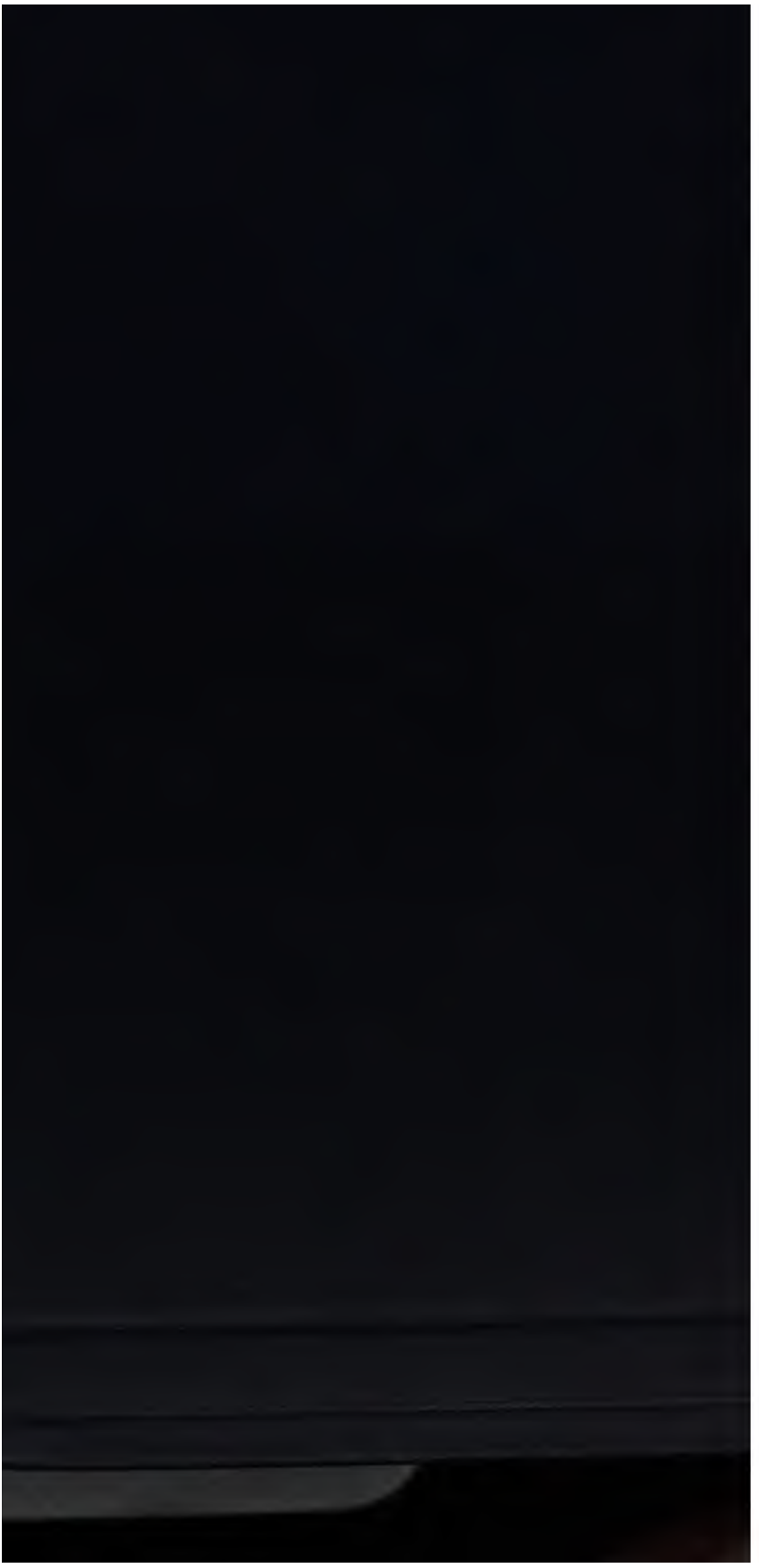
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